

The Biology of The Cross

J. Benjamin Lawrence

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The biology of the cross

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*Lectures delivered
at the Southwestern Baptist
Theological Seminary*

✓By
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Introduction

THIS book undertakes to set forth the fact that Christianity is life and that this life comes from the Cross. This is a message that this age needs to hear. The Cross is still a stumbling-block to the Jew and an offense to the Greek. A great deal of present day religion can see no saving power in the Cross. A suffering Saviour is no Saviour at all to twentieth century Pharisaism. It even rejects the doctrine of the Cross as unethical. It is not just for one man to suffer for another's sins. And worldly wisdom still rejects the doctrine of the Cross as foolishness. But to those who are being saved the Cross is still the power of God and the wisdom of God.

It would be well if Christianity to-day could say with Paul more emphatically : "God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." The Cross to Paul did not stand simply for a martyr's death. It was the symbol of a redeeming act upon the part of the Lord of Glory. It stood for an act of grace in which one who existed from eternity in the form of God and on equality with God voluntarily surrendered Himself to death on the Cross for the

redemption of man. This doctrine of the Cross was to Paul the central thing in the Gospel. "Jesus and Him crucified" was the one message that would save men. Any other gospel was no glad tidings at all, for it left men under the curse of the law and did not give the liberty of grace. And it is just as true now as then that the message of the Cross is the pulpit's one message for sinning and sorrowing humanity. A view of the Cross is the only thing that will lift the burden from sin-laden souls.

Paul has been criticized for teaching a doctrine of "legalistic" justification. But Paul's doctrine of justification was not merely legalistic. It was a "justification of *life*" (Rom. v. 18). Since he believed in God, he believed that man could not truly live without being in right relation with God. And when a sinner was brought into right relation with God through faith in the propitiatory death of Christ (was justified) he began to live. Being in wrong relation with God meant death. Coming into right relation with Him meant life eternal.

One reason perhaps why men do not "glory in the cross" more is because it means to be crucified to the world and for the world to be crucified to them. It necessitates taking up the Cross daily and following Jesus. The Cross is not merely a doctrine to be accepted. It is also a power to be experienced. To glory in the

Cross one must crucify the flesh with the affections and lusts thereof.

It is a good sign that the religious world is turning its thought again to the Cross. A new appreciation of the Cross is the only thing that can keep the Church from degenerating into an ethical culture club, a society for social reform or theological debates. The Cross is rightly the symbol of Christianity. It is the Cross that distinguishes Christianity from every other religion—not the Cross, of course, without Christ, nor Christ without the Cross, but Christ on the Cross. It is Christ lifted up that is to draw men.

Our Christianity needs vitalizing. This can be accomplished only at the Cross. There is a world lying in the wicked one to be won and saved for God. Only the Cross can furnish the motive power for such a task.

This book, treating as it does of two of the central ideas of Christianity, the Cross and life, and showing how life comes from the Cross, will, I believe, prove a vitalizing agency to its readers.

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I

THE BIOLOGY OF THE CROSS

THE central figure in all sacred history is the Cross of Christ. To it the index finger of prophecy turns, and from it the Gospels gather their power and inspiration. Roman soldiers planted the tree of the Cross upon Golgotha, but the crucifixion of our Lord is the fulfillment of prophecy: whether the acted prophecy of type or the spoken prophecy of prediction.

The earliest records of our race, sacred and profane alike, represent man as seeking acceptance with God by means of sacrifice. It does not matter whether this was originally a divine command, or whether the human mind instinctively perceived the fitness of the rite; in either case, the sacrifice was from the first accepted, and as soon as laws were given, was regulated and required. Whatever might have been the inspiring motive in the earlier sacrifices of humanity, there is a plain recognition in all of them that man is separated from God, and that in approaching Him it is necessary in some way to remove the intervening bar of human sinfulness.

Sacrifice was, therefore, always typical.

Isaac, the only son of Abraham, bearing the wood of the burnt offering to Mount Moriah, is a type of the only begotten Son of God who bore His Cross to the Mount of Crucifixion. On Mount Moriah it was not Abraham but God who provided the ram for the burnt offering, and when that sacred place was called "Jehovah Jireh," the name did not mean that Jehovah would provide merely temporal blessings for His people; but it meant that the sacrifice for sin, which man could never furnish, would be provided by God Himself. The Pass-over lamb, whose blood sprinkled upon the lintels of the door preserved the homes of Israel from the destroying angel on the night that God smote the first-born of Egypt, is a type of that other Lamb who was sacrificed on the Cross for us. The victim in the sin offering on the day of atonement was a type of that perfect sacrifice of Christ, "who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God." This is the fact set forth by Isaiah in that mountain peak of prophecy when he exclaims: "He was wounded for our transgressions; He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed."

Thus we have limned on the background of sacred history foregleams of the Cross. Yea, and more than that. The tree of pain was in the heart of God before all time. Christ was

the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. God erected the Cross. Above the inscription of Pilate there was written by the finger of God the real meaning of the Cross ; methinks I read written there this inscription : “Herein is love : that while men were sinners, Christ died for them.”

I

The Cross is not a creed, but a life-giving power. This fact has been veiled by theology. The theological systems which have grown up around the Gospel have monopolized the Cross ; they have lifted the Cross out of the ethical setting of the life of Jesus and planted it in an environment of doctrine. They have continuously traced it back to covenants and inserted it into decrees ; stated it, all but exclusively, in terms of justification and propitiation. Theology has one territory which is theory ; religion has another territory which is life ; and the Cross belongs to religion.

The Gospels do not represent the Cross as simply a judicial transaction between Jesus and God on which not the slightest light is thrown, but as a vital force which Jesus introduces into human life, and which He declares will be its redemption. “The wonder of the Cross,” says Dr. A. H. Strong, “is that it opens a window into heaven, through which we see the central fact of existence, the innermost secret of the

universe ; nay, the very heart of God. There, as in a burning-glass, are concentrated all the rays of the Sun of Righteousness, and there the God, who daily beareth our burdens, took to Himself our sorrows and death that we might be free. But Christ's Cross did not reveal the judging, suffering and saving God as a mere objective show. Its aim was to declare the essential principle of all true life, and to reproduce that life in us. In Christ, who was stretched upon that Cross, we see the pattern and beginning of a new humanity."

The Cross may be made into a doctrine of theology, but Jesus spoke of it as the regeneration of man. There are two kinds of religion offered for the relief of man. One gives a formula, a creed, to be accepted ; the other gives a life to be received. The religion of Jesus is the religion of life, and it is impossible to understand the relation subsisting between Him and humanity without viewing that relation in the light of the term "life."

Jesus is indeed the greatest teacher the world has ever produced, but He is vastly more than a teacher. He is the greatest religious genius that has ever appeared among men, but His supreme work for the race was not simply the organization of a new religious movement and the formulation of a new creed. The very heart of His efforts for humanity centres not so much in His teaching, for He gives us little

that is new in the realm of religious thought, but His work for the race centres in His Cross. The Mount of the Sermon is not the pulpit from which He speaks His tenderest message to man, but the Mount of Calvary is. The Cross tongues with more eloquent pathos the heart of His mission, the soul of His attitude towards the race, than does the most eloquent passages from His tenderest sermons. In fact His teaching finds its key and explanation in the Cross.

The reason for this is that Christ did not come primarily to instruct men, but to save them. What the race needed was not information but redemption. This Christ secured through the Cross. He died for sinners, and ever since His Cross has been the sign of rescue for the race. Whatever may be the nature of that sublime transaction upon Calvary ; whatever the name by which men may call it,—Atonement, Sacrifice, Redemption, Propitiation ; whatever relation it may have to the moral law and to the divine righteousness,—its relation to the human heart is luminous and beautiful. It takes away sin. On Christ Jesus, in His life and in His death, were laid the guilt and the consequences of a world's sin. Standing solid in the centre of human history is the Cross of Christ as the symbol of a world's redemption. Jesus comes to save the world. He saves it by giving it life. He unites in one life the

kingdoms of Himself and me. By one costly outpouring of Himself He created a divine environment for me. When we come to study this life-relationship to Him, a relation sealed and vitalized by the Cross, we pass beyond the sphere of theology and enter the kingdom of biology.

II

It may seem at first a contradiction of ideas to set the Cross in a field of life. But in the thought of Jesus the Cross is planted in an environment of life. "I, if I be lifted up," says He, "will draw all men unto Me." This "lifting up" must refer to His crucifixion on the Cross, and yet He does not hesitate to say, "I came that they might have life, and have it more abundantly." The Cross stands to the life that He is to give as cause to effect.

In the history of redemption the Cross is the token of our Lord's obedience unto death ; the symbol of the sacrifice of His life for the world. This crucifixion-act, a sacrifice so patent and so brilliant that it has arrested every mind, men call death. The philosophies of the world turn away from the Christ on the Cross saying, as did the two disciples on the way to Emmaus, "We had thought it was He who would redeem Israel." This is because men shrink from death, and they see in the Cross only death. But in the mind of God the Cross is the symbol of

life. With God, as Jesus revealed Him, life is an eternal procession of gifts, a costly outpouring of self, an unwearied sacrifice of love. The mystery of life, divine and human, is contained in these words of Jesus: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a grain of wheat fall into the ground it abideth alone, but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. He that loveth his life shall lose it, and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal." This is the mystery of being. This mystery is twofold: first, the life, the living force which was in Christ reached its proper value and influence through His death; and, second, the proper value of Christ's life is that it propagates similar lives.

This then being the law of life, Christ must not only announce it, He must observe and enforce it. He speaks of Himself even more directly than of us when He says: "He that loveth his life shall lose it." His disciples thought that they had never seen such promise in His life as at this hour: seed-time seemed to them to be past, and the harvest at hand. Their Master appeared to them to be launched on the tide that was to carry Him to the highest pinnacle of glory. And so He was, but not, as they thought, by asserting Himself. Christ saw with different eyes. He knew that it was a different exaltation from that they dreamed of which would win for Him lasting

sovereignty. He knew the law that governed life, and so He exclaims, "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto Me." He knew that a total and absolute surrender of self to the uses and needs of others was the one path to permanent life, and that in His case this absolute surrender involved death. His death, like the dissolution of the seed, seemed to terminate His work, but really it was its germination. So long as He lived, it was but His single strength that was used; He abode alone. There was great virtue in His life while He lived,—great power for the healing, the instruction, the elevation of mankind. But it was not until after His death that the full power of His life came upon men. On the Cross a change passed upon Him which disengaged the vital forces which were in Him; a change which thawed the springs of life in Him and let them flow forth to all. It was on the Cross that He poured out His life unto death and by that act put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. It was on the Cross that He triumphed over the powers of evil, destroyed the dominion of death, and opened a new fountain of life. And now His Cross has become the glory of Christianity. It is the seat from which He teaches His highest lessons, the throne of His power as King in the universe. Of all the aspects and relations in which Christ appears to us, the primary one is that of the Cross.

III

But Christ is, above all else, the giver of a new life. He was the grain of divine wheat which fell into the soil of humanity. The dying necessary to a new life took place upon the Cross. That divine human transaction accomplished two fundamental things. On the one hand, it broke down the barriers of death; on the other hand, it planted in the human kingdom a new-life germ.

Next to life the most pregnant symbol in religion is its antithesis, death. From the time Jehovah God said, "The day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die," this solemn word has been linked with human interests of eternal moment. Death, in the human life kingdom, is the barrier that stands between man and that experience called eternal life. This death is connected with sin. "Wherefore as by one man sin entered into the world and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Men are not in peril of death, they are in the inmost sense and truth of things dead. As our bodies live by being in correspondence with the light and air and food under the economy of material nature, so our spirits live by correspondence, through faith and love, with the unseen and eternal. Hence, the man who walks the earth a rebellious sinner against God is separated from God and becomes in consequence a dead man. The doom of sin

lies on his unforgiven spirit. He carries death and judgment about with him. Within his living frame he bears a coffined soul. There can be no life for that man until sin is dealt with and the barriers of death broken down.

This is the work of the Cross. God hates sin, but loves the sinner. God hates death. It is foreign to His nature; it is an intruder into His kingdom. But humanity cannot be redeemed from the power of sin and the kingdom of death without the self-vindication of justice. The race is under the power of death because of sin, and sin, according to the eternal law of God, must be punished. In the Cross we see, first of all, God's judgment upon human sin.

So the Cross is the sign of the awful tragedy of sin, of the revolt of the race against God, of the blasphemous suicide of the human soul in the Garden of Eden. But it is a sign in which there is the promise of triumph and victory. That victory is won in the death of the Cross. God did not merely come as Messiah to lead, by His example, humanity to triumph, that were impossible; but He came to stand by the side of fallen man, to walk calmly with him the way of shame, to step fearlessly into that death which is the wages of sin so that the race might be redeemed from sin and death. The Cross then suddenly irradiates light—a lurid, painful, awful light at first, a light that shines in the death of the Holy One upon the Cross

for human sin. This suffering, this shame, this association of Himself with sinful man is redemptive. Its object lies far beyond the Cross itself. It is the universal love of God that suddenly, with dramatic flashing vividness, bursts into human life to transform and to save.

Christ was one with the race. He was the central heart and conscience of the race. He felt the awful load of guilt that bore the guilty race down and bowed beneath the sentence of righteousness. Even our half-developed conscience demands a God who hates and punishes sin, and we can worship and respect no other. Christ's conscience went farther, He saw that He Himself must suffer because He was one with the sinful race. He saw in the pain, misery and death of mankind the marks of the divine anger, and He took that pain, misery, and death into His own bosom. He saw the wrath of God revealed from heaven against human iniquity, and He opened wide His arms to receive its shock and to shield His brethren. From the first day of human transgression there had been gathering a cloud of just indignation. It culminated when the heavens grew dark at Christ's crucifixion. But out of that darkness emerged a triumphant Saviour-Man ; out of that darkness came the revelation once for all of the holiness of God ; out of that darkness came the revelation that God must first be just before He can be merciful. Any scheme of theology

which leaves out the Cross may be an application of Christianity, but it is not Christianity itself; for Christianity is essentially union with the crucified and risen Christ.

IV

Christianity is the outflow of the Cross, and Christianity is life. We have failed in theology to grip the souls of men because we have tried to press into creeds and definitions the operations of the vital forces in the kingdom of grace. Definitions here, if not impossible, are at least dangerous. They have an inherent tendency to substitute themselves for the things defined. The terms in which the fact is expressed creep into the place of the fact itself. The reality is removed insensibly to a remote distance behind the verbal symbols which represent it. The way of access to it is blocked and its influence is restricted by the forms of expression invented to define it. Thus the creeds and confessions and definitions which theologians have used to set forth to the world the operations of divine grace—those operations in which the living powers present in the world and at work for the world's redemption manifest themselves—have to a large extent covered and hidden the vital elements in Christianity so that it has become a mystical system instead of a revealed life.

When we come into the kingdom of the Cross we are not dealing with formulas but with vital forces. The Cross was planted upon Golgotha that men might have life. Life was the burden of the teaching of Jesus. He did not set Himself to tell men how to organize the state or how to formulate a system of theology. This was not because Jesus was not interested in these things, but because He recognized that back of these things there was a vital principle at work building states and commonwealths and evolving systems of theology. Back of the state was the individual, back of the individual is the soul, and the one supreme element of soul is life. Touch and change the life and you have given a new course to the being, you have given a new expression, a new character to the soul. This Jesus knew. He knew that the only way to make the body politic alive was to regenerate the individual. Thus, when He touched the life of humanity and erected the Cross in the heart of human history as the sign of the destruction of sin and death He created a new life-force destined ultimately to transform the kingdoms of this world into the kingdom of Jehovah God. When he opened the way through the Cross for individual redemption He laid the basis for the ultimate salvation of all civilization. When He brought life and immortality to light through the Cross He es-

tablished a new divine environment for man and fertilized human nature to its farthest border.

The New Testament conception of Christianity is life, but it is life through the Cross. To the apostles the Christian was a new creature, a new being. The current conception of Christianity as we find it in the inspired record is expressed in terms of life. It was after the age of inspiration had closed and the age of theology had begun that men began to seek the origin of Christianity among the philosophies. And it does not seem to occur to the scholars of to-day who continue to contrast it with human philosophies of the past and scheme to fit it into philosophies of later growth, that it is much more than a philosophy, that it includes a science, a biology pure and simple.

The apostles understood Christ to mean, in His teaching, literal life and not simply a new state of being or a new condition of being, though these are included. When He said, "I came that they might have life and have it more abundantly," they understood Him to mean a new vital entity. The apostolic belief is defined by Reuss as "the idea of a real existence, an existence such as is proper to God; an imperishable existence,—that is to say not subject to the vicissitudes and imperfections of the finite world." This primary idea is repeatedly presented at least in the negative form.

It leads to a doctrine of immortality, or, to speak more correctly, of life, far surpassing any that had been expressed in the formulas of the current philosophy and theology, and resting upon promises and conceptions altogether different. The idea of life as it is composed in this system implies the idea of power, an operation, a communication, since this life no longer remains, so to speak, latent or passive in God and in the Word, but through them reaches the believer. It is not a mental, somnolent thing; it is not a plant without fruit; it is a germ which is to find fullest development.

This life which Christ brings into the world and which He makes possible for all men is the product of His sacrifice upon the Cross. With a soul that is sinful and hence spiritually dead life cannot begin until there is deliverance. Jesus, as the Physician of the soul, had first to deal not with growth but with deformity, with sin and death; and Jesus, who alone has analyzed sin, has alone prescribed its cure. When He cried out on the Cross, "It is finished," it was then that the gates of death were broken down. With the reign of death broken, all those who had been held under its power were given access to the kingdom of life. This right Christ purchased. After the tribute of His voluntary expiation death had no more dominion over Him, and through Him no more dominion over those who accept His sacrifice.

When Christ offered up Himself wrath to the uttermost was spent upon human sin. The shafts of death were forever shattered. He triumphed in His death over death. Not only so, but that His victory might be complete we are informed by two of the apostles that Christ triumphantly descended into the lower world and took formal possession of the kingdom of the dead. "Now that He ascended," says Paul, "what is it but that He also descended (first) into the lower parts of the earth?" whence, in the strong figure of Scripture, "He led captivity captive." Triumphing over all the enemies of our salvation—sin, death, and Satan—in His Cross; having asserted His authority and Lordship over the kingdom of death and the grave, Christ comes forth triumphing and triumphant. This triumph was won through the sacrifice of the Cross, which sacrifice clears away the old obstructions between God and man, sets up a new series of conditions under which it is possible for the divine power to operate, introduces into the world a new all-mastering energy, and plants within the individual believer a new life consciously dependent upon God and controlled and borne along by an infinite and resistless force. It was through the Cross that the wall of partition was broken down between God and man and the divine-human type of life, through regeneration, made possible.

V

The Cross is planted firmly in the history of humanity as the sacrificial cause of spiritual life. What man could not do for himself God did for him, preparing the atonement in His own eternal nature and offering, as a gift, salvation and life. Christ is the sacrifice for sin. As in the Epistle to the Romans He is the end of the law for righteousness ; so, in the Epistle to the Hebrews, He is the end of the sacrifices for eternal salvation.

But let us remember that it was a son of the race as well as the Son of God who was sacrificed. Hence the Cross stands solid in the centre of human life. This is as it should be. If sin is a principle in man's life, then it is evident that it cannot be effected by a simple historical act exhibited from without ; it must be met by an opposing principle from within. This condition the Cross meets. Nothing that belongs to the incarnate history of Jesus can be regarded as terminating in Himself. He was not man for His own sake ; had He joined us for His own glory His alliance with the race would not have been by incarnation and birth into its dying lineage. He became man that He might give to us what He needed not for Himself. The incarnation was the method of His approach to the Cross. Remembering that the Redeemer's duty was His passion, and that in His example as proposed to us this is always prominent, we

can see the force of Peter's words, "Christ also hath once suffered for sin, the just for the unjust."

But the Christ that suffered was a member of the race. Humanity in Him was being reconciled to God by this oblation. We are Christ's and Christ is ours. The Redeemer was not His own, but our possession. He gave Himself *to* us before He gave Himself *for* us. When He obeyed unto a sacrificial death He undid our sin. He was our Redeeming Representative; our Sin-offering and Burnt-offering in one. But let us remember that He is the Son of Man as well as the Son of God, and that in Him humanity is meeting the divine satisfaction for sin. His death includes our death. The Cross marks the end of the old humanity and the beginning of a new human family with Christ as the spiritual head. The death of the Christ on the Cross is the life of the soul of man in the new kingdom.

The Cross is also the method of development for the soul. Christian fellowship and service are products of the Cross, and, for us as for Christ, there is no glory except through suffering. Close fellowship with God has always proven a costly, self-sacrificing service. A life of carelessness is to nature and self the sweetest, but it is not the best. Christ's life of sacrifice is the most bitter of all, but it is to be preferred above all. God laid a world-sin on a world-

soul in order that the soul of the world might enter into His own divine experience and be saved with an everlasting salvation. Progress is made by suffering, and, like every other great fundamental principle of life, this is embodied in the economy of human nature and confirmed by the sweep of human history. The Cross is the condition of every achievement. Jesus remains forever the convincing illustration of this severe formula. In His own life-history He was the grain of divine wheat planted in human soil. He must first die before there could be a glorious harvest of redeemed souls. The Cross of humiliation and death must come or else there can be no exaltation and glory. Christ went by the way of the Cross because it was the only way divine wisdom could plan and divine justice could sanction. It was the only way by which life could be brought to man. By becoming, in His death, the food of men's souls, Christ brought a new life into their souls. Over and over again He declares Himself to be "the life" and the "source of life" for man, but that life-giving power of His is conditioned on His death.

Christ has nothing to offer this world, if it would live, but the Cross. He was willing to undertake the salvation of every soul, but He knew no other way for the soul's salvation except the Cross. As He went to His Cross for men's souls He now calls upon men to

follow His example. "If any man will be My disciple, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow Me." It is only as men are crucified with Christ, only as they die through His Cross to self and the world that they rise again to newness of life. If His disciples wanted to sit on His throne they must drink of His cup and be baptized with the baptism of His suffering. Jesus did not walk one way Himself and propose another way for His disciples, but He invited them to His experience if they desired His life. He nowhere commands men to cling to His Cross, but He everywhere commands men to carry His Cross; and out of that daily crucifixion commanded there are born the most beautiful Christian characters. This is the illustration of that selflessness which is the Law of Holiness, the enforcement of that death which is the gate of life. There is no salvation, no hope of everlasting life but in the Cross.

II

CHRIST THE HEAD OF A NEW HUMANITY

THE Cross is made significant to humanity because of the person who hung thereon. If there are forces emanating from Calvary working for the salvation of the world it is because of Him who sanctified with His sacrifice the cruel tree. Had there not been on the Cross a Saviour-Man then the crucifixion would have been simply a pathetic tragedy. But as it is the tree of shame has become the sign of rescue for the race, the Cross of suffering has become the hope of triumph for the world.

In the biology of the Cross we come naturally to the life of the one who made the Cross a way of life to the world. If there is to be a new type of men in the world, a type called Christian, then there must first be an antecedent type from which this new race must generate. From antecedent life all life must come. The preservation of type is a law of God. Like begets like in the spiritual world as well as in the material world. Jesus is the source of this new life. He is the antitypical Christian.

As a matter of history it is plain that the force which started Christianity was the person

Jesus. He was and is the core of His own Gospel. From His wonderful personality emanate the saving powers which vitalize the Christian system. These vital powers are the life-forces resident in His personality. In stating this fact we make no assumptions and propound no theories. It is not necessary to take anything for granted or to adopt any particular theological or philosophical system in order to see clearly and beyond the possibility of mistake that all the forces and influences of Christianity in the world have emanated directly from Jesus Christ. He is the soul and life of the Christian religion.

But Christ is more than the source of moral influences ; He is the source of life, the spiritual head of a redeemed family. The most characteristic designation which Paul applies to Jesus is “The second Adam.” “This title,” says Stevens, “suggests the idea that He is the head and founder of a new humanity ; that in Him a new human history takes its rise. The relevant passages are 1 Cor. xv., and Romans v. In the former chapter the apostle is contrasting death and life. Adam is the cause of the one ; Christ of the other. ‘Since by man (Adam) came death, by man (Christ) came life.’ Later (1 Cor. xv. 45-49) he contrasts their natures. The first Adam was made a living soul—a creature sharing the perishable life of nature ; the last Adam became (in His resurrection) a life-giving spirit. He is the ‘second man from

heaven'; He is 'the heavenly one.' In Romans v. 12 Christ is the counterpart of Adam. Through Him comes to man the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness which outdoes the power of sin introduced by Adam. 'Through His obedience many are made righteous (verse 19), and grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.'

This is the end contemplated in the Gospel. The kingdom of God is a kingdom of a new order in the universe. Christ is the type of citizen. This new kingdom is set over against the kingdoms of this world in which Adam is the type of citizen. In Adam resided the life-type for the redeemed family. Adam was the life-head of the sons of men; Christ is the life-head of the children of God.

If Christ then be the spiritual life-head of the redeemed family, the founder of a new humanity, to stop short of Him in our inquiry would be to fail to trace the life-powers in the biology of the Cross to their source. Who then is this person that stands at the head of the Christian-life kingdom? What is His relation to the Cross? And through Him what is the relation of the Cross to both God and man?

I

In the redemptive work of Christ we are confronted first of all with the divine side of the

transaction. The atoning work of Jesus is God's effort to restore the moral order of the universe. God is in Christ reconciling the world to Himself. This brings us face to face with the unique claim of Jesus. He declares that He is the Son of God; He also asserts that He is the Son of Man. On the one hand He is distinct from Him whom He calls Father, and yet so related to Him that He fully possesses His nature; on the other hand, He is distinct from His fellows among men, and yet one with them in life and experience.

We pass by the theological theories concerning the nature of His personality. We are concerned with the fact that the life of God and man meet in Christ and form a new type—the God-man life—and shall endeavour to set that fact forth. Jesus did really assume the true and perfect nature of humanity into a personal and complete union with the divine nature so as to become true man while He remained true God in one person forever. This doctrine may be stated as follows:

1. Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God, the second person in the Trinity, of one substance and equal with the Father.
2. This eternal Son of God became man, and yet was at the same time truly God.
3. In becoming man He assumed a complete human nature, a nature consisting of a real body and a rational soul.

4. The human nature which He assumed was our common nature, the universal nature of the human family.
5. He inherited this nature from His mother, Mary, and in her and her progenitors it was, before He assumed it, the same fallen nature which every child of the race inherits.
6. In the incarnation, in the act of conception by the Holy Spirit, the human nature which He received was purged from all hereditary taint so that Christ was the Holy One, the immaculate Son of God.
7. In the Atonement it was not the divine nature as such, nor was it the human nature as such—it was neither God alone, nor man alone, that suffered and died, but it was the Christ, the God-Man, in His complete and entire personality.

In this union divinity is not dormant nor humanity deficient. There are those who hold that the immaterial part of Christ's humanity is only metamorphosed Deity. They claim that Christ had a sensitive but not a rational soul, and that the Logos performed the functions of reason. Some critics have intensified this position by extending their denial to all Christ's immaterial being, claiming that His body alone was derived from the virgin. This theory gives neither real divinity nor real humanity, and consequently no real union between the two.

There is not, either, a double personality.

The theory of two personalities, two consciousnesses and wills, was first elaborated by John of Damascus. It distinguishes between Christ's humanity and His divinity in such a way as to divide Him into two halves; either half appears virtually complete without the other, and both of which are united, not in a single and sincere personality, but in an outward manifestation and concealed life, covering in some mysterious way a double centre of existence. It is true that Christ possesses two natures, but as Strong observes, "this possession of two natures does not involve a double personality in the God-Man for the reason that the Logos takes into union with Himself, not an individual man with an already developed personality, but human nature which has had no separate existence apart from the divine nature."

There is a single personality. There are two natures, but one person with one consciousness and one will. To say that Christ in His capacity as man was ignorant, and yet at the same time in His capacity as God was omniscient, is to accuse Christ of unveracity. Whenever Christ spoke it was not one of the natures that spoke but the person in whom both natures were united. There is no intimation in all Scripture that the God-Man is not a single will and consciousness. There is no hint or indication that Christ is leading a double life, reigning consciously as God while He is suffering

apparently as man. His personality is simple and indivisible. And while the manner in which this union is affected may be beyond our comprehension, yet the difficulty of conceiving the manner of the divine unfolding in human nature does not destroy for us the reality of the divine-human life. He who said, "I thirst," said also, "Before Abraham was, I am."

The reality of the divine-human union in one personality is fundamental. If the one who died on Calvary were a mere theophany, then His death was little more than a divine spectacle. In this transaction the body of Jesus was broken, but God was not touched. But if the Father truly spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, then the Father also made an invisible sacrifice and an infinite surrender of love for our sakes. Then the Son also suffered, making a visible sacrifice, and pouring out His soul unto death to redeem us from the fear of death and the power of sin. This is what did take place. When the lightning stroke of indignation fell upon the Cross, it smote the heart of the Son of God. When He bore our sins in His own body on the tree it was the person of the only begotten Son that suffered. In this crucifixion act there was expressed both the justice of God and the love of God. As God's holiness gathered all the thunderbolts of the Divine Anger into one ter-

rific fulmination there was expressed the justice of God ; but at the same time the love of God was expressed in His only begotten Son who hung upon the tree and gathered into His own bosom all the darts of the Divine Justice. The age-long sufferings of God for human sin was condensed and expressed in the agony of His only Son. God provides the sacrifice for sin ; He gathers into Himself all the penalties due humanity. This is the relation of the Cross to God. Through the incarnation divinity is connected with the Cross and vitalizes that transaction with the life of heaven.

II

But Christ is human as well as divine. If there is any fact which stands out distinct and luminous in the experience of the early Christians it is that they saw in Jesus not merely a mysterious manifestation of divinity in a form calculated to beget new doubts, but they saw in Him something utterly different. They saw the mystery reduced to terms of simplicity ; the revelation levelled to the direct apprehension of man, the unveiling of divinity under conditions which were so similar to the things they were acquainted with in human life, that they dissolved doubts and difficulties. They saw in Christ a brother, true, a brother linked onto the life of Jehovah, but still a brother of the race, making supreme effort to save the race.

The work of Christ, therefore, in His effort of redemption is a part of the history of humanity. The sufferings of Jesus are the sufferings not only of the Son of God, but also of a member of the family of man. He is the Son of Man as well as the Son of God, and as such is making answer to God on the question of the divine demand upon humanity. He meets the issue squarely and solves for all time the problem of evil for the race.

This is the meaning of His human life. He was bone of our bone, flesh of our flesh, blood of our blood; He was one with us in all the experiences of human pain and suffering in order that He might come, as a brother of the race, into such a relationship with the race as to stand sponsor for it. To become legally responsible for man, Christ had to become a co-partner in nature with man. He who deals with the problem of evil must attack it from the human side as well as the divine side. Sin is somehow so related to humanity that it has become identified with these bodies of ours, and identified in such a way as to find its expression through them. Hence, Christ comes into our nature, takes upon Himself the form of sinful flesh that He may condemn sin in the flesh.

For centuries the devil had reigned supreme through the flesh. His will of evil had been the dominant power in the world. Christ, the

new man, steps out upon the arena of human action and questions the authority of the devil. He comes clothed in the nature which the devil has always found it so easy to overcome, and challenges the power of Satan. He assumes that the nature of humanity, as God originally made it, was sufficient to withstand the power of the devil when that nature was put in right relation to God. He at no time retreats behind the shelter of His divine nature, but as the Son of Man puts Himself in the right relation to God and then challenges the whole host of demons. Jesus comes into the human-life kingdom, the kingdom which the devil has usurped, and conquers Satan and drives him out.

It is the facts of life, its secret potencies, its mysterious limitations, its magnificent unfoldings that we are now face to face with. Christ comes to open a new way into the kingdom of life. This He accomplishes not simply by a legal transaction, but by a vital relation. He did not stand aloof from the race and make a legal adjustment that would satisfy divine justice, but He became one of the race and met actually every divine demand made upon the race. He met also every legal requirement and satisfied fully all the claims of offended and outraged justice. He became a part of the universal humanity, through which the forces of evil had operated in the past, and by a life of supreme obedience to God and a

death which was a complete satisfaction for sin, He banished evil from the new-life kingdom. This kingdom He proposes to make universal. He calls it the kingdom of God.

III

As the result of Christ's relation to God, on the one hand, and to man, on the other hand, thus bringing together God and man in one person, we have the two parties concerned in human redemption meeting and sharing in the sublime sacrifice of the Cross. This gives us a new conception of redemption. Salvation is not something thrust upon man in which he has no vital interest apart from the benefits received. It is not simply a crumb of benevolence falling from the tables of infinite plenty. Nor is it simply a commercial transaction in which Jehovah God bargains through His Son to give the devil so much suffering for the souls of men on the one hand, and, on the other hand, bargains with men to give them eternal life if they will give to His Son so much service. Nor is it the stoop of infinite condescension in which the Divine One, touched with pity by man's poor sin-stricken state, gathers His righteous robes around Himself and stoops to save in the most condescending way the helpless wrecks of mankind, preserving in all the transaction such an attitude as would make the saved sinner feel the stigma of his former state and

cause him to go grovelling as an unworthy reprobate through the rest of his life. These ideas, which have found more or less currency among men, are caricatures on the work of Jesus.

We must also steer clear of the idea that it is by a simple deed of amnesty that man is invited to return and be at peace with God ; it is by a deed of expiation. It is not by nullifying the powers of the law that man is offered a free and full discharge from penalty, but it is by executing the law upon another. God does not lift man's iniquities from him and scatter them to the four winds of forgetfulness, but Jesus Christ lifted them off the shoulders of the race and placed them on His own shoulders. The guilt of the sinner is not done away with by a mere act of forgetfulness, but it is atoned for and washed out by the blood of the Lamb. The legal side of this transaction is, however, only one side of it ; the life side is the main feature. Christ met the conditions of the law, but it was in order that a new-life kingdom might be established. He united the life of God and man into one conscious being and thereby established a new spiritual headship for the race in order that there might be a new humanity. He obeyed all the laws necessary to this union. Justice and righteousness had to be satisfied. Every divine condition had to be met so that the resulting union of the two natures would be harmonious and the resulting

life free. This was the legal side of the question. These conditions were all met. The God-Man, free and yet a member of the race, assumed humanity's obligations and met the full penalty for all human failures.

Here lies, plain and distinct, the fundamental fact of the Gospel. That fact is that Christ, as the God-Man, assumes the guilt and consequences of a world's sin. We do not profess to be able to give an explanation of how this is possible. Theories manifold have been invented in order to make it plain. No one of them has gone to the bottom of the divine fullness. But we do know that Christ, in His perfect manhood wedded to true divinity, is capable of entering into such closeness of relation with humanity, and with every man, as that on Him can be laid the iniquity of us all.

This is the method of Jehovah God. The spirit of redemption has always been at work. No sooner has one part of nature done or received an injury than all the rest of nature comes like a kind doctor to heal the wound. If the lightning strikes a tree, nature seems to become more tender to it, and, hardly has the flash passed, until the healing, redeeming, motherly spirit has taken the tree in charge to bind up its wounds. We call this the self-restoring power of nature, but whatever we call it, it is after all the redemptive force ; it is God at work keeping His creation together and

making it whole. In the universe He is Shepherd, Mother, Physician, Friend, protecting even the sparrows and coming to heal and to cure and to reconstruct all things from the tenderest blade of grass to the most ponderous planet. Shall the God of grace operate in continuous healing power in nature and allow the sons of men to decay in sin? Shall His power of redemption pervade the entire universe and not sweep the fields of human life? Such an attitude would be a violation of His nature. The Christ of God takes away the sin of the world. He redeems the world. He does not try to save it; He does not compromise with it; He does not say, "I will do the best I can under these disastrous circumstances"; but He meets the tragic need of a sin-sick earth and opens the door of hope and life to all. Christ has procured the right of release for every soul. The conditions of pardon have been met for every man. What the first Adam did has been undone by the second Adam.

IV

Christ, by coming into the life-kingdom of man, put Himself in a position where He could assume man's obligations, but that is not all He did. To purchase freedom from man is one thing, to give freedom to man is another thing. Man's trouble did not consist simply in the fact that he was a sinner, but he was spiritually

dead as well. To establish the conditions of pardon for the race is of little avail unless the souls of men are quickened. Salvation does not consist in a simple act of forgiveness, though forgiveness is included. A saved soul is a regenerated soul. The key word in the religion of Jesus is life. That which He gives to us is life. If the work of Christ means anything to the race it means a new life relation to God. Jesus brings us into the family of the Father. He brings the life of divinity out of the inscrutable and unknowable mysteries of the divine regions of existence and so focalizes that life in a human personality that we can comprehend and understand somewhat the Father's love. He brings human nature, the life of man, out of the depths to which it had fallen and unites it onto the life of divinity in such a way as to constitute a new-life kingdom.

This kingdom is a new thing in the universe, and the citizens of this new kingdom are beings of a new order. It is a kingdom in which there is united the highest order of material being,—the man-life, with the highest order of spiritual being,—the God-life, into a new order of being,—the God-Man life. This new person is of the family of heaven. He is not simply a creature, but a son. He has come into the possession of the highest principle of life by being brought into contact with the Father through the new spiritual head, Christ

Jesus. This has been accomplished by Christ in a supernatural way, the incarnation. When the Logos became flesh, divinity was brought into the life-sphere of man. But in the same act humanity was brought into the life-sphere of God. While God humbled Himself in stooping to this relation, humanity was glorified by it and given a divine-life environment. Human life was then invested with a new meaning. It was then given a new life-centre. There was established, through the redemptive work of Christ, a Christ-life kingdom. This Christ-life kingdom is the God-Man kingdom. The life-source in this kingdom is Christ. Because we have personal relation with Christ we come into the Christ-life, become members of the family of God, and pass out of the kingdom of sin and death. “There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, for the law of the spirit of life in Christ hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin condemned sin in the flesh that the righteousness of the law might be made manifest in us who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.”

V

The effect of this whole system is salutary and tremendous. As Dr. Van Dyke says : “If

the Son of God, who is the image of the Father, by laying aside the outward prerogatives of His divine mode of existence, actually becomes human, then, and only then, the divine image in which man was created is no mere figure of speech, but a substantial likeness of spiritual being. There is a true fellowship between our souls and our Father in heaven. Virtue is not a vain dream, but a definite striving towards His perfection. Revelation is not a deception, but a message from Him who knows all to those who know only in part. Prayer is not an empty form, but a real communion." And he might have added, Christianity is not simply belief in a creed or obedience to a set of rules, but a life in which the soul is to live in fellowship with the Father.

Such a conception at once rectifies, purifies, and elevates our view of God. It is through the human life of the Son that we become acquainted with the Father. "No man hath seen God at any time, the only begotten Son who is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him." It is through Christ and His work that we come to know the most divine characteristic of God. This is not vast size, dazzling physical glory that overawes the senses, but infinite goodness, holiness that cannot be tempted, and love that accommodates itself to the needs of all His creatures. The resistless might of natural forces shows us only the

omnipotence of God. The power that upholds the planets speaks but of physical force and tells us nothing of a holy, loving being. Nothing but an impersonal power meets us in all these mighty manifestations of nature, and though the whole universe fell into ruins around us, or though we saw a new world spring into being, still we might suppose that the power by which all this was effected was impersonal, and could hold no fellowship with us. Only, then, through that which is personal, only through that which is like ourselves, only through that which is moral, can God reveal His true character to us. This we find in His Son, our brother, Christ Jesus.

If we doubt that there is a divine goodness upholding all things let us look to Christ. It is in Him that we see goodness tested and tried under circumstances and in environments which we can examine and understand. This is goodness carried to the highest pitch, goodness triumphant, the goodness of One who comes among us from a higher sphere it is true, but of One who lived one common life with us. It is the goodness of God translating itself into the actuality of human history. This revelation of God gives us a new conception of God. For if the Son of God can surrender omnipresence, omnipotence, and omniscience without destroying His personal identity, then the central essence of Deity is neither infinite wisdom nor infinite power, but infinite goodness.

And so from the very lowest valley of humiliation we catch sight of the very loftiest summit of theology, the serene and shining truth that God is Love.

In Christ, through His human-divine relation, we have revealed also the true and ultimate glory of humanity. Sin had so spoiled human nature that we could never know its original glory and dignity if the Logos had not come into it and lifted it up. Sin had spoiled the work of creation. Man had fallen far short of the glory of God. It seemed as if failure was to be written on the face of earthly affairs. But the Logos grasped the divine concept, came down to earth and gathered together the broken fragments of fallen humanity and worked out into a spotless person God's idea of manhood. Humanity, in its union with the divine nature in Him, and, through His grace which makes union with the divine nature a fact in the life of every believer, is immeasurably exalted in dignity and worth, but at the same time becomes more intensely human. The Christian, which is the product of the redemptive work of Christ and the ultimate outcome of God's saving thought towards the race, is the true, the ideal, the ultimate manhood. This work of God's grace is an over-reach of love towards mankind, and the complete overthrow of all the wicked devices of the devil.

Man was created a little lower than the

angels, but in the final culmination of the redemptive purpose of God in Christ, the redeemed will be infinitely higher than the angels. This final outcome is not because of sin, but in spite of it. In the beginning God made man a creature; in redemption through Christ's Cross God makes man a son. Thus through the sacrifice of the divine-human Christ that which sin would have ruined is lifted up to the proud position of Sonship in the life-kingdom of the Father. This is the supreme triumph of humanity accomplished for us by our human-divine brother, Christ. It is the supreme thwarting of the purposes of Satan. It is the supreme salvation of humanity.

This glorious result is obtained through the sacrificial work of Christ. It is through the redemptive work of the divine-human Son that we are adopted into the family of the Father, and not only adopted into the family, for the work of Christ goes deeper into things than the establishment of mere legal relations, but we are made one with the life of the Father. If the work of Christ means anything to the race it means a life-relationship with God. Christ brings us into the fellowship of the life of the Father as well as the knowledge of God.

VI

In the economy of divine doings, Christ's coming and His Cross were necessary. He laid

by His Cross both the basis of condemnation and the basis of justification. But the Cross had to be set up ; the sorrow and suffering had to be endured though no answering heart called Him Lord and Saviour. Sin must be dealt with. A divine answer must be given to a Satanic challenge and a human apostasy, and that answer could be given only through the Cross. In the divine plan it was impossible to escape the Cross whether any one responds to the call of love as it sobs out its message on the tree of suffering or not. The Saviour-Man must go by the way of the Cross to fulfill the divine demand. It is the eternal must that drives Him to the tree of sacrifice. And the saved-man must go by the way of the Cross also if he would fulfill the divine conditions in the Christ-life kingdom. The Cross is the gateway into glory for all the race, and Christ made it more than a deliverance from sin ; He made it the entrance-way into the life of God.

III

THE EMBRYOLOGY OF THE NEW LIFE

IN that splendid work of genius, "Natural Law in the Spiritual World," Henry Drummond, one of the most scientific of all the religious writers, says: "For two hundred years the scientific world has been rent with discussions upon the origin of life. Two great schools have defended exactly opposite views—one that matter can spontaneously generate life, the other that life can only come from preëxisting life." He then shows by an array of evidence overwhelming that a decided and authoritative conclusion has at last been reached. "So far as science can settle anything, this question is settled. Spontaneous generation has had to be given up. And it is now recognized on every hand that life can only come from the touch of life."

In the religious world a similar discussion has been waged for more than two hundred years. Exactly opposite views have been taken by two great schools of thought. One has contended that spiritual life in man can come only from preëxisting life; the other that it can spontaneously generate itself. They have differed also as to the nature of spiritual life in

man. To one school spiritual life is a new entity; to the other, it is only the old nature regulated. One school holds that Christianity does not consist simply in conformity to a certain set of rules, but that it is a divine life breathed into humanity from the nostrils of God; the other holds that Christianity is a system of faith or a body of doctrine in which is set forth the regulations by which one's life is to be governed, and that by meeting certain specific external demands, the individual is, by a legal process, absolved from all guilt and made free from condemnation.

The difference between these two positions is radical. According to one theory man is spiritually dead, that is, he is wholly destitute of spiritual life; according to the other theory man is only in a condition bordering on death; there is yet in him the germ of spiritual life which only needs stimulation that it may become active and cultivation that it may become dominant. This is simply the spontaneous generation theory and means that a man may become gradually better and better until in course of the process he reaches that quality of religious nature known as spiritual life. This life is not something added ab extra to the natural man; it is the normal and appropriate development of the natural man. The whole doctrine of regeneration is opposed to this theory. The scheme of redemption presupposes that man is dead, dead

in trespasses and sin. It was because of this fact that Christ came into the world. Life was the gift He brought to man; as He said, in His magnificent way, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."

I

Herbert Spencer has given us what he calls a definition of life. "All vital actions," says he, "considered not separately but in their ensemble, have for their final purpose the balancing of certain outer processes by certain inner processes. Whence it becomes manifest that life is the definite combination of heterogeneous changes, both simultaneous and successive in correspondence with external co-existences and sequences. Divesting this conception of all superfluities and reducing it to its most abstract shape, we see that life is definable as the continuous adjustment of internal relations to external relations."

This definition does not deal with the production of life, but only with its maintenance in any given kingdom of being. It points out the relation between environment and life, but there must first be life before there can be correspondence of any kind. Behind all adjustments of internal relations to external relations there is a vital entity whose business it is to make these adjustments. We call that energy

life. This term expresses but does not define for us the vital principle back of all organic being and development. This life principle is distinct, on the one hand, from the matter upon which it operates to produce organic form; and on the other hand, it is distinct from (although it is the cause of) all organic growth and activity. This mysterious something we call life challenges definition. It retreats into mystery and all man's wisdom is incapable of coaxing it out of this inscrutable retreat. Every attempt which man has made to drag this fleeting entity to the light of understanding has only served to exhibit the futility of the attempt and to prove that, while men know a great many interesting and curious facts about life and reproduction, yet, when it comes to life itself, they can give no intelligent explanation of it.

But while we cannot tell what life is, yet we can distinguish between the different forms and expressions and types of life in the various life-kingdoms with which we are surrounded. While it is a living principle that animates all organic beings, yet it is not the same principle. There is a different kind or type of life for every species. In the protoplasmatic state it is true that the biologist cannot distinguish between the life-germ of the reptile and the life-germ of the bird. "There is, indeed," says Beale, "a period in the development of every tissue and

every living thing known to us where there are actually no structural peculiarities whatever—where the whole organism consists of transparent, structureless, semi-fluid living bioplasm—when it would not be possible to distinguish the moving matter which was to evolve the oak from that which was the germ of a vertebrate animal.” This structureless, semi-fluid substance called protoplasm is not only the structural unit with which all living bodies, both plant and animal, start in life, but it is the substance with which they are subsequently built up. “Protoplasm,” says Huxley, “simple or nucleated, is the formal basis of all life. It is the clay of the potter. Beast and fowl, reptile and fish, mollusk, worm and polyp are all composed of structural units of the same character, namely, masses of protoplasm with a nucleus.” But the very moment the organism begins to develop and to take on organic form there is a marked difference. One piece of protoplasm is fashioned into a bird, another piece of the same protoplasm is given the form of a serpent, and still another piece of the same protoplasm is builded into man. What is it that determines the difference? It is the mysterious something which has entered into this protoplasm. No eye can see it. No science can define it. It is the vital entity we call life. “Protoplasm being the clay,” says Henry Drummond, “this something is the potter. And as there is only one

clay and yet all these curious forms are developed out of it, it follows necessarily that the difference lies in the potters. There must be in short as many potters as there are forms. There is the potter who segments the worm, and the potter who builds up the form of the dog, and the potter who moulds the man." Moreover each potter confines himself exclusively to working out his own plan. "He appears to have his own plan somehow stamped upon himself, and his work is rigidly to reproduce himself."

This artist who operates upon matter in this subtle way and carries out the law of conformity type is life. This vital entity being different in each operates to the upbuilding for its own type an external existence. Thus the bird-life seizes upon the things environing it and builds out of these a bird, the image of itself. The reptile-life seizes out of its environment the same chemical elements and fashions them into a reptile, the image of itself. In both instances it is the nature of the life within that determines the character of the organic expression. The reptile is but the incarnation of the reptile-life. The visible bird is but the organic expression of the invisible bird-life. Behind all incarnations and all visible manifestations of organic form there must first be the vital principle called life, which principle incarnates itself and through this incarnation gives to itself organic form.

This brings us to the place where the spiritual analogy appears. These lower phenomena of life are but the simpler forms in the operations of the Great God of life. All life has its source in God. But these lower forms do not exhaust the divine operations. There is a higher kingdom of being than that attained by man in the most lofty reaches of his highest correspondences. This higher life, called the spiritual life, obeys the same laws which govern the lower forms of life. As the protoplasm is the clay with which the lower forms of life build organic structures, so is the human soul the spiritual protoplasm with which the heavenly life builds the spiritual organism. As the bird-life builds up a bird, the image of itself, out of the material protoplasm with which it is environed, so the heavenly life implanted in the inmost nature of man builds up a heavenly being, the image of itself, out of the spiritual nature of man. This is a wonderful analogy, so startling that one hesitates to put it into words. "Yet," as Drummond says, "nature is reverent; and it is her voice to which we listen."

II

This throws new light upon man's spiritual nature and puts a new construction on his relations to the kingdom of the heavenly life. Man by nature, and we are dealing with him as

Christ found him, is out of correspondence with that higher environment called the spiritual world. But he is out of correspondence with it because his life is not the heavenly type. Environment does not determine the nature of the life, but the nature of the life determines the environment. The difference in the nature of the life of different species is the fundamental reason for the impregnable barriers which stand between different types. The fish is dead to the universe of the bird not simply because of a failure to correspond to the environment of the bird, but because it has a different kind of life. The animals in the kingdoms beneath man are dead to the intellectual and moral kingdoms in which man lives not simply because of a failure to correspond to the environment in these kingdoms, but because the life in each type beneath man is different from the man-life. Hence man is dead to the heavenly life because the type of life which he possesses is of such a nature that it cannot make the "continuous adjustment of internal relations to the external relations" of the heavenly kingdom. In other words man has life, but it is not the divine type; he lives, but not in the heavenly realm. If one might give the broader meaning to the words of Paul: "The type of life which man has is not subject to the law of God neither indeed can be."

We are not now discussing the nature of sin.

It is enough to know that sin separates from God, that it is apostasy from God. We are not concerned either with the origin of evil. We face the fact that man by evil has suffered the loss of heavenly life. Christ did not in all of His teachings speak of the origin of sin or discuss its specific nature, yet He recognized it as having its seat in the heart, the inner life, the sphere of motive and desire. In His teachings He follows the law of conformity to type as set forth in biology. In the thought of Christ the inner life rules the outer life (Matt. vii. 34). Hate is the source of murder (Matt. v. 22). Lust is the essence of adultery (Matt. v. 28). Holding to this conception, which is only the law of conformity to type transferred to the field of moral conduct, Christ taught that character determines the acts and words of men, and that if you change the outer life you must first change the inner nature (Matt. vii. 17-20; xii. 33). That Christ considered the type of life which man possessed of a different kind from that which he must have if he would come into the heavenly life is evident from His discourse with Nicodemus. Here in the most unmistakable terms He declares that a man—not Nicodemus simply, but any man—cannot get into the kingdom of heaven until there has first come a radical change in his nature. “That which is born of the flesh is flesh,” and it remains flesh and cannot enter

the kingdom (1 Cor. xv. 50), and “that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit.”

It is universally admitted, because a universal fact of consciousness, that the feelings and affections are not under the control of the will. No man can love what is hateful to him, or hate what he delights in, by any exercise of his self-determining power. Hence the philosophers, with Kant, pronounce the command to love an absurdity, as skeptics declare the command to believe absurd. Man’s connection with sin has so affected his life that the type which he now has is “not subject to the law of God neither indeed can be.” Man has, through transgression, fallen to that position in life where, by no self-determining power which he possesses, can he force the inner powers of the soul into submission to the will of God. This makes the new birth an absolute necessity.

III

In the embryology of the new life we not only have to deal with the old nature, but we have also the transforming life and the new being resulting from the operations of the heavenly life as it works within the soul of the individual into whom it has been planted. In nature there are three things—formative matter, formed matter, and the forming principle of life. This analogy follows in the spiritual world. In the kingdom of grace the soul

of man furnished the spiritual protoplasm out of which the new spiritual being is to be formed. But there must be a formative agent. We have seen above that by no self-determining power within man can the affections be turned towards God. The life man has is not the right type for heavenly citizenship. The type of heaven must come into him before he can live spiritually.

It is to supply this need that Christ came into the world. Christ's mission to the earth was to give men life. He came because men were dead ; because they were separated from the life of God. Through His incarnation Christ brought the life of heaven into the life of man ; through His act He brought God and humanity together in one person, the God-Man, and in this new person opened, through the sacrifice of the Cross, the fountains of a new type of life.

This life which Jesus brought into the world and which He proposes to give to men is the Christ-life. This life has its centre and source in God. When one thinks of life in the Christian as one thing and life in God as another thing, he has lost the science of being in the Christ-kingdom. Christianity does not consist in mere conformity to a set of rules ; it is an implanted life. Jesus claimed that He was "The Life," and that His supreme function in the world was to give men life. "I am come

that they might have life, and have it more abundantly." Peter declares that we are made "partakers of the divine nature," and Paul assures us that "Christ is formed in us the hope of glory." The Christian life is in its origin heavenly and cometh down from above.

This principle of life is connected with Christ. The germ of it is in Christ. He that hath the Son hath life. "When a man becomes a Christian," says Henry Drummond, "the process is this: The living Christ enters his soul. Development begins. The quickening life seizes upon the soul, assimilates surrounding elements, and begins to fashion it. According to the great law of conformity to type this fashioning takes a specific form. It is that of the artist who fashions. And all through life this wonderful, mystical, glorious, yet perfectly definite process goes on 'until Christ be formed' in it." Those who possess the Son possess the spirit of the Son. That spirit is, so to speak, organized within them by the Son, so that as Paul says: "It is no longer I that live, but Christ that liveth in me."

This life comes not from generation, but from regeneration. The relation between the spiritual man and the life above is a filial relation. He knows the Father, and that is life eternal. This relation is established through the Son. "Neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the

Son shall reveal Him." It was through the Cross that the wall of partition was broken down between man and God and the new human-divine relationship established.

IV

It is very important that we should have a right conception of this wonderful miracle by which the spiritual protoplasm, the soul of man, is seized upon by the incoming Christ-life and built up into a new being which is the image of the Son. One's understanding of this mysterious process will largely colour his conception of the Christian life. If he is led to believe that regeneration is nothing more than a change in his old nature, and that this change is in some manner gradual in its operations, then, when he finds, as he surely will, that this nature of his which is supposed to be changed still longs for the world and the things of the world, he will be filled with continual anxiety and apprehension, doubt and fear.

Regeneration has been defined to be "that act of God by which the governing disposition of the soul is made holy, and by which, through the truth as a means, the first exercise of this disposition is secured." This definition does not provide for, yea, it does not include or even comprehend the supreme thing in regeneration. The governing disposition or power of the soul is indeed holy, but this new power is

not the old disposition changed, but a new life implanted. Hence in defining regeneration we want to get away from any suggestion that would even faintly imply that this mysterious process is simply making over the old man. It is a new birth ; the implanting of a new life ; the formation of a new being. God in Christ through the incarnation makes possible a new type of life. This new life type begins in regeneration and is consummated in glorification. The Christian is a new creature.

But let us appeal to the divine record. In what terms does the New Testament describe this process ? The answer is significantly striking. It uses everywhere the language of biology. There are seven words used to set forth the process of the new birth, GENNAO, ANAGENNAO, PALIGGENESIA, ANAKAINOSIS, APOKUEO, KTIZO, SUZOOPOIEO, and every one of these words carries the idea of a new being, a new beginning, a new birth, a new creation. GENNAO means to beget ; ANAGENNAO to beget again ; PALIGGENESIA a new birth ; ANAKAINOSIS a renewal, from ANAKAINAO to make new ; APOKUEO to bring forth, to produce ; KTIZO to create, and SUZOOPOIEO to make alive. This brings us to the inevitable conclusion that regeneration is not an internal and spiritual rectification, but the bringing into existence of a new life. A spiritual man is not a carnal man highly refined. The two men

belong to different species. Spiritual life is not a question of chronology, but of biology. It is a problem of origin, and not a theory of development. Regeneration is not the setting of the hands of a clock, nor the repairing of the mainspring of the old, but the creation of a new timepiece.

This fact is emphasized by the contrast between the old life and the new life. Christ tells us that "that which is born of the flesh is flesh," and, "that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." Here the contrast is not simply between the material and the immaterial, but between the old kingdom-life and the new kingdom-life. Paul so understood it and so used it in his famous contrasts between the "flesh" and the "spirit" (Rom. v. 16-24; vi. 19; viii. 4-7; 1 Cor. iii. 3; 2 Cor. v. 17; Gal. iii. 3, 9), where "flesh" is used in contradistinction to "spirit" as designating either "man in his natural state apart from Christ, or the creaturely side or aspect of man in Christ." This life—the flesh—is presented in Scripture not as a thing to be improved, but as a thing which God counts as dead, and which we are called upon to mortify—subdue and deny in all its thoughts and ways. In the Cross we see the end of everything pertaining to the flesh (Gal. v. 24). God expects nothing from the flesh; neither should we. The old life should not be allowed to show itself. God does not

own it. It has no existence for Him. It is dead.

It is not to be understood, however, that the old life is not affected, or that the character of the regenerated person remains unchanged. This old life is the material with which the new life works in the creation of the Christian. "When a new animal is made," says Drummond, "no new clay is made; life merely enters into already existing matter, assimilates more of the same sort and rebuilds it. The spiritual artist works in the same way. He must have a peculiar protoplasm, a basis of life, and that must be already existing." This protoplasm is found in the life of the natural man. The mind and the character, the will and the affections, the moral and the immaterial nature—these form the basis, or to state it more correctly, the material out of which the Christ-life implanted in regeneration builds the Christian. Hence there is going on in every regenerated person a spiritual transformation. This transformation is that process in which the Christ-life takes the life-elements of the natural man and builds them into the spiritual organism called the heavenly man. As the bird-life grasps the material protoplasm with which it is environed and builds up a bird, the image of itself, so the Christ-life grasps the life-elements, the mind and will and the affections of the individual into whom it comes, and builds up a God-man,

the image of itself, in the inward nature of man. We call this process sanctification. The idea of a man's character, therefore, as it expresses the totality of a man's being, is only begun in regeneration, and the process proceeds not by changing our fleshly nature but by killing our fleshly desires and propensities in the process of building up the spiritual man. But so long as the flesh-life remains, the propensities and dispositions of this life will be in evidence. Evil is not a part of our flesh as matter, but it is a part of our nature, and our present nature is a part of our fleshly existence. Hence evil is one of the links in the chain of our world-life, and so long as we live in the world, will, through the flesh-life, have a field for operation.

To know this is an immense relief to the heart that has been struggling for years in the hopeless business of trying to improve nature. It is also an immense relief to the conscience which has been seeking a foundation for its peace in the gradual improvement of a totally unimprovable thing. It is an immense relief to the soul that has for years been earnestly breathing after holiness, but has looked upon holiness as consisting in the improvement of that nature which loves sin. No one who has not experienced it can conceive the intensity of anguish, and the bitterness of disappointment, which a soul feels, who, vainly expecting some improvement in nature, finds, after years of

struggle, that the old nature is the old nature still. God is not looking for improvement in our old nature, that is dead in Christ, and is simply the basis out of which the new life is to be built up, but He is looking for the development of the Christ-life implanted in regeneration. To be led into a clear and full apprehension of this is the divine emancipation of the conscience.

V

The mystery of life is inexplicable, hence we do not hope to be able to explain how this life of Christ comes to be implanted in the soul. We can only give the forces which operate under given conditions to produce life; we cannot explain the mystery of their operation. This, however, should not keep us from receiving the truth of this great subject. We cannot comprehend God, or the Divine Logos manifested in the flesh, or the person and work of the Holy Spirit, but by faith we can know God and become recipients of the redemptive work of Christ. So, while we cannot comprehend the mysterious work of life-creation within the soul through Christ, yet by faith we can enter into that union with Him, which gives eternal life. It is enough for us to know the combination of forces which operate in the production of spiritual life within man.

The source of this life, as we have seen, is in Christ. He is the germ of spiritual life.

But in the New Testament, when this subject is discussed, we find two things associated together in the work of life-production ; these are the Spirit and the Word. "But as many as received Him to them gave He power to become the Sons of God, even to them that believe on His name ; which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God " (John i. 12-13). A parallel text may be found in Ephesians (i. 13). "In whom we also trusted, after that ye have heard the Word of Truth, the Gospel of your salvation ; in whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise." Paul says in another place : "Because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth " (2 Thess. ii. 15). Peter to the same effect says, "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit ; being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible by the word of God " (1 Peter i. 22-23). These passages establish the fact that the Spirit operating through the word implants the Christ-life in the soul of the individual. We call this the new birth.

The reason for the use of the word seems to be that God does not wish to violate, even in the supernatural work of new-life production in the soul, the laws by which mental processes are governed. He meets us on our own ground.

He approaches us in a natural way. Hence we are not overawed by the supernatural in regeneration and yet, all the time, the supernatural is predominant. The Gospel is God's method of approaching the soul. In it are the facts upon which our faith is founded, and facts must forever remain the basis of faith. The Gospel is God's appeal to the human heart. It exhausts all the sources of moral power. Every consideration that can affect the intellect, the conscience, the feelings, the will and the hopes of man are presented. This gives us the rational basis for the use of the word in the life-production process.

This word, however, is useless without the Spirit. To all moral, and especially to all religious truth, there is an inward unsusceptibility, arising from the perversity of the affections and will, which must be removed before the soul can or will perceive or be moved by the truth. Hence the Spirit must deal directly with the soul. He comes in contact not simply with the instrument, but with the soul itself. At Jericho, the force was not applied to the ram's horns, but to the walls. When Jesus healed the blind man, His power was not applied to the spittle, but to the eyes. So God's spirit does not act upon the word, but upon the soul. And yet the word must be present in order that the sensitized soul may be led to see the Saviour through whom alone salvation is secured.

The person who is thus touched by the Spirit through the Word is brought into a new life, or rather, has a new life brought into him. The emphasis is not merely upon the change as initial but upon the inherent nature of the Christian life as divinely originated. It is God's self-communication of Himself to man. The fourth Gospel speaks of this new spiritual entity as "eternal life." It is the birth in the soul of man of a new personality or type of manhood that is Christlike and spiritual. The process is analogous to that of natural birth and is set forth by Christ under the figure of natural birth. The soul of man is the spiritual womb in which the Christ-life germ is planted.

The source of this life as we have seen is in Christ. The legal difficulties in the way of its manifestation are removed through the sacrificial work of Christ, which work includes His incarnation. It comes to be implanted in the soul as we have seen above through the Spirit operating through the Word, which word revolves around the Cross.

IV

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF FAITH

A WONDERFUL change has taken place in the intellectual world in the last half century. The renaissance of science fructified every field of human thought. The light turned in upon the world of matter and life, by the discovery of new facts, dissolved many archaic systems of thought. Every department of human thought was revolutionized except theology. Here the scientific method met with the most bitter opposition. Religion immediately arrayed itself against science. This was, perhaps, for two reasons: First, in the beginning the efforts were destructive in their purpose since it was the skeptical mind that attacked the problem of a scientific explanation of religious phenomena; and, second, the ancient and established moulds into which theological thought had crystallized refused to yield readily to the new process.

We have at last, however, passed the skeptical period and now under the touch of friendly fingers Christian thought is beginning to conform to the facts of biology and psychology and geology. There was a time when the

student of religion was concerned only with the formation of creeds. The work of redemption was reduced to a system of doctrine. The life of Christ was set forth as an article of faith. Dogmatic systems of theology were set up and enforced as the only way of salvation. That time has passed. Now the Christian teacher and writer recognize that Christianity belongs not simply to the realm of theory, but to the domain of being. And recognizing this they are bringing the facts of science to bear upon religious phenomena. This is as it should be. No truth is without religious significance. Every fact in the universe should be used to enrich our knowledge of the greatest of all facts, the redemption of the race.

One of the results of this change in front has been to supplant analysis with synthesis in the study of religious phenomena. Analysis is destructive of life, and Christianity is a life. The dissecting room may be necessary for the demonstrator in anatomy, but dissection means death. The most perfect bodily organ is worthless and lifeless if separated from the other organs of the body. This is true of spiritual life. The various elements which enter into the spiritual organism are not isolated factors. The spiritual life is a unit. Conversion and regeneration go together. Faith and repentance are related functions of the quickened soul. And these are all joined in and are necessary to

the outward expression of the religious life. Spiritual life—that vital entity implanted in the soul in regeneration—expresses itself in the various ways described in the Bible. These may be catalogued as love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, meekness, temperance, humility, unselfishness, beneficence, self-sacrifice and faith, and whatever else belongs to the Christian character; but the spiritual organism is not made up of these things by a process of addition or multiplication; the new creature is one thing and is simply manifesting itself in these ways, and not in these ways alone, but in every conceivable way that love and duty can prompt. These expressions of the Christian life are functions of the spiritual ego.

In the teaching of the New Testament faith is one of the chief functions of the new life. The participation in all the blessings of redemption depend upon it; the support and progress of the spiritual life are essentially connected with it. Christ divided men into two classes from the standpoint of religion, not morals—those who believe, and those who believed not. He marvelled twice, once at men's unbelief, once at a Roman centurion's faith. When men came to Him with the question, "What shall we do that we may work the works of God?" Jesus answered, "This is the work of God, that ye believe in Him whom He hath sent." Faith

stands in the forefront of all New Testament teaching.

I

Many attempts have been made to define faith. None of these are entirely satisfactory for the simple reason that all of them have considered faith as a doctrinal requirement in a plan of salvation. Dr. B. W. Pope defines faith to be "a divinely-wrought belief in the record concerning Christ and trust in His Person as a personal Saviour."¹ Dr. A. H. Strong defines faith to be "certitude with regard to spiritual realities, upon the testimony of our rational nature and upon the testimony of God."² But these definitions do not define faith. They simply state the result of faith's operations. Behind a "divinely-wrought belief" there is something that does the believing. As the act of recollecting is the product of memory so the act of believing is the product of faith. Faith is a function of the soul and as such it is to be classed with memory, imagination, and the other conscious elements of the ego. "It is," says Fletcher, "a mental state that is indispensable if the human personality is to pass from lower levels of existence to the highest spiritual experience of the moral and religious life. Regarded psychologically, faith is a state of consciousness which is capable of being

¹ "Compendium of Theology," Vol. II, p. 376.

² "Systematic Theology," p. 3.

analyzed and understood like any other psychological state."¹

If faith is a function of the soul, a method of the soul's operation in performing certain conscious actions, and not a mere doctrinal requirement, then we may expect to find in it, on close analysis, somewhat of the three elements of consciousness,—thinking, feeling, and willing. This we find to be the case. The faith-state as reflected in the writings of the New Testament can be readily analyzed into these three elements. "Sometimes," says Fletcher, "the intellectual factor (as belief) operates most prominently, at other times the emotional (as a feeling of trust) bears sway, and yet again the moral side (as purposeful surrender) at times appears in the forefront. Faith is a complex state of mind in which all of these elements are present within the personality. But one or the other, according to the temperament and disposition of the subject, takes the lead and gives character to the whole state."²

Faith may then be defined as that form of conscious activity by which the soul admits as knowledge what is received only on evidence or authority internal or external. This definition will clear away a great deal of the misconception which has gathered about the nature of faith. We have no longer the task on our

¹ "Psychology of the New Testament," p. 219.

² *Ibid.*, p. 220.

hands of discriminating between an historical faith and a saving faith ; between a natural faith and the faith that is supernatural. The nature of faith throughout the conscious act of believing remains the same. The functional act of the soul, by which it receives as knowledge whatever is presented on evidence, remains the same whether the evidence be of supernatural phenomena or of natural phenomena. The difference arising in the effect which the exercise of this function produces in the life of the individual does not grow out of a difference in the nature of faith, but out of the difference in the character of the knowledge thus received and the relation which that knowledge bears to the ego or self. The facts of salvation,—the story of redemption, including the crucifixion of Christ, His burial and His resurrection,—cannot influence the soul and cause it to surrender to the Christ revealed in the Gospel, until the relation, subsisting between these supernatural facts and the individual ego or self and its eternal well being, is revealed to the soul and becomes a matter of consciousness. Hence men hear the Gospel and receive it as a statement of historical facts, but they are not moved by it. Why are they not moved ? There is but one explanation, the subsistent relation between the individual and the Gospel story has never become a matter of consciousness with them. These facts cannot become a matter of experi-

ence in the life of the individual until they are spiritually discerned. This takes place with the quickening of the ego in regeneration, in which process there is implanted the life of Christ by the Holy Spirit. This spiritual discernment has to do, not primarily with the Gospel story as an historical fact, but with the relation subsisting between these facts and the soul. This relation is entirely spiritual and can be comprehended only by a spiritually sensitized soul. So soon as the subsistent relation between the soul and Christ is discerned faith admits that relation as a matter of knowledge and makes it a fact of consciousness. The result is the Christian life.

We have seen that the type of life which the natural man possesses is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. This type of life cannot discern spiritual relationships for it is dead to the heavenly. "No man can say that Jesus is Lord but by the Holy Spirit" (1 Cor. xii. 3). Hence the natural man cannot perceive the subsistent relation between Christ and the soul because this relation is only spiritually discerned (1 Cor. ii. 14). In the kingdom of Christianity, as in every other kingdom of life, the first step towards the production of a new organism is the implantation of the life germ. This is unmistakably set forth in the Scriptures. "And you hath He quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins. Even when we were

dead in sins, hath made us alive together with Christ. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ unto good works" (Eph. ii. 1-10). Saving faith is, therefore, not a new element of the old life, but an act of the new creature. It is not a new spiritual commodity which the old life generates and by which it is changed, but it is the use of an old function by a new power. It does not produce a new entity, for the new birth is the product of the Holy Spirit operating through the word. Its function is to produce the consciousness of the spiritual relation subsisting between Christ and the soul in the ego or self and thereby work a new experience. This experience we call conversion, and it consists in the turning of the personal ego, in its threefold power of thinking, feeling and willing, to Jesus Christ as Saviour. This experience is different from the new birth in that the new birth is the implanting of the Christ-life, which implantation results in the quickening of the soul; conversion is the turning of the soul under the stimulant of that quickening to the Christ of the Gospels as Saviour.

II

With this definition of faith let us consider it in relation to other mental activities, activities which we are informed are opposed to faith. The two acts, knowing and reasoning, which

are products of the thinking element of consciousness, are most persistently set over in opposition to faith, which we are informed is purely a product of feeling.

There is a wide-spread notion that knowledge and faith are in the inverse ratio. But when we bring the two together, in a comparative study, we find that they are in that perfect harmony which is required of two actions of the same ego. Knowledge is what a man knows, faith is what a man believes. A man knows what has been verified by facts that have come under his own observation or experience; a man believes what has been presented to him upon authority. Hence, faith, one function of the ego, comes before knowledge, which is a result of the exercise of another function. Therefore faith is superior to knowledge, in that without faith every man would be tremendously limited in knowledge, since most of the things which fill up the cabinets of information have been received on faith. Again, put faith to the test and you always have knowledge. Take the history of the race, the geography of the world, the speculative sciences, and these are all received by the average student upon testimony—they are matters of faith. Put these things to the test, demonstrate them for one's self and they become matters of fact-knowledge. So faith goes before knowledge; it goes where knowledge cannot go; it is a

higher sort of knowledge. It enables one to rise above the range of knowledge. It is like the condor of the Andes, the bird of highest flight. When the tempest comes, weaker birds fly to their coverts, under the cliffs, and where they can be protected from the fury of the elements. Not so the mighty condor. Turning his eye upward, he cleaves his way to the empyrean, and there basks in the sunshine above the tornado's fury and beyond the storm-cloud's power. Thus faith enables us to mount up on eagle's wings, above the clouds and darkness that hover over the lowlands of reason and knowledge, in that everlasting light which knows no shadow, flowing in peace and stillness from the throne of the Eternal.

The same thing is true with reference to the relation between faith and reason. There are those who seem to think that faith and reason stand opposed to one another, and that reason is superior to faith. On close analysis we find that there is no conflict between faith and reason. Sir William Hamilton says: "We know what rests on reason, we believe what rests on authority." This would bring us to the conclusion that reason itself rests upon faith, for the data with which reason works in forming her judgments are, in the main, accepted on authority and are therefore matters of faith. Not only so, but faith is positive, reason negative. "Reason," says Combe, "is the superior

and predominant element which settled the direction in which all other faculties shall expand." Emmanuel Kant, in his "Critique of Pure Reason," says: "The greatest and, perhaps, the sole use of all philosophy, of all pure reason is, after all, merely negative, since it serves not as an organon for the enlargement of knowledge, but as discipline for its delimitation, and instead of discovering truth, has only the modest merit of preventing error." This deliverance of Kant was quoted and endorsed by Prof. T. H. Huxley in the *Nineteenth Century* for February, 1889. Surely those who exalt reason against faith will respect Kant and Huxley, and not suspect them with being biased in favour of evangelical religion. Hodge tells us, "That reason is that faculty which perceives, compares, judges, and infers." But reason must always work with the material in hand. Its work is not to gather material, but to separate the material gathered into its particular elements. Therefore reason does not lead out in the mind's activities; it simply directs the mind in its investigations so that the individual will not go astray. Faith sweeps beyond this. It goes beyond reason. And yet it uses reason. Reason acts as a check. It prevents one from believing things that are contradictory and absurd. The two, faith and reason, go hand in hand in the search for truth. Reason could not go one step without faith,

and faith would likely go astray if it were not for reason. Faith demonstrates that it is not unreasonable to believe in Christ. The experience which it brings, the consciousness of the divine acceptance, demonstrates to reason the truths of Christianity, truths which could never be known by reason alone. It is reason that prevents our going wrong, but it is faith that enables us to go at all.

In the Christian life faith furnishes the basis for both knowledge and reason. The Holy Spirit taking the truths of the Gospel and bringing them to bear on the faith-function of the soul, makes the individual conscious of the relation subsisting between the ego or self and the facts of the Gospel, and, through this consciousness, produces in the individual an experience. This experience furnishes a conscious basis in the soul for both knowledge and reason. Men know what comes within their own personal experience. This experience is a fact of consciousness which reason cannot deny. Hence faith, knowledge, and reason become closely allied in the Christian life. Faith brings the soul into the consciousness of the spiritual life implanted in regeneration, and this consciousness, being a fact of experience which reason cannot deny, is accepted and made the basis of a new life. This is the psychological basis for the statement in Hebrews: "Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the

conviction—the demonstration—of things not seen" (Heb. xii. 1).

All the hopes of the Christian are not only grounded on faith, but they are grounded in faith. Outside of our trust in Christ there can be no legitimate ground for hope; in this confidence and trust in Christ there is not only the ground for hope, but the seed-bed, the germinating place, the incubation for every hope of the soul. Faith, therefore, is the whole Christian life in germ. But faith is not only the basis of hope; it is also the demonstration of things not seen. Faith furnishes the proof of the existence of the unseen world. The physical senses give to the soul the knowledge of the material world. Through these senses the material objects are inwrought upon the soul and become a part of the personal consciousness. It is with them as matters of consciousness that we deal. But there is a world higher than the material. Have we no communication with it? The faith-function of the soul is the sense by which the things of the spiritual world are brought into the personal consciousness and become matters of experience with us. A personal experience is the end of argument. It is a fact. It is a matter of knowledge. It is an element which reason has to accept. Hence, so long as our natures can trust, so long as our faith can unfold to us a morality, so long as our hearts can pray, the simple soul need not

bewail its want of logic and its lack of argument to prove the verities of God. As Dante says :

“ And from this credence it is fit and right
To syllogize, though other sight be none :
Therefore faith holds the place of argument.”

III

We turn now to consider faith as set forth in the New Testament. The word faith, “ *Pistis*,” occurs two hundred and twenty times in the New Testament. The verb to believe, “ *PISTUEO* ” occurs two hundred and thirty times. John uses the word faith only once (1 John v. 4), but he uses the verb to believe more than one hundred times. Paul uses more largely the word faith, using it in his Epistles one hundred and thirty-six times. In Hebrews, which is Pauline in thought, the word faith is used thirty-one times. Because of this divergence between Paul and John in the use of words to express the soul’s acceptance of Christ, interpreters differ considerably in their judgment as to the central idea in the New Testament presentation of faith. This makes it necessary for us to study the question first from Paul’s standpoint, and then from John’s standpoint ; after that we can compare the two conceptions and draw a conclusion as to the teaching of the New Testament.

With Paul faith is a very rich conception. It is at once an attitude of receptivity and of sympathy. In Paul's way of thinking it is an affair of the heart. It is with the heart that man believeth unto righteousness (Rom. x. 10). It is through faith that Christ dwells in the heart (Eph. iii. 17). But Paul does not forget the thinking elements of consciousness, for to him it is through the mind that the heart or feeling element is to be reached. There must be an intellectual perception of truth, for how can they believe on Him whom they have not heard? So Paul concludes that "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Rom. x. 14-17). In Paul's conception there is also the idea of activity as well as receptivity. Here the volitional element of consciousness enters. In faith men enter into active fellowship with Christ. Faith is, therefore, in his thought inseparable from all good choices and actions (Rom. xiv. 25). It includes the choice and pursuit of truth (2 Thess. ii. 12). It implies separation to the righteousness of God (Rom. x. 3). It is, in short, the movement of the entire personality towards God and righteousness. In faith man enters, in the thought of Paul, into fellowship and sympathy with God. He is connected with Christ in such a way as to become one with Christ. To live by faith is synonymous with living in Christ, and with Christ living in the believer (Gal. ii. 20). It denotes a

mystical union, a mutual fellowship. This is the inner consciousness, or experience of salvation which makes Christ a real thing to the believer. By it a new life-relationship is set up in the heart and man comes into fellowship with God and appropriates all the blessings of salvation.

In John we find a few passages in which the verb to believe is used in the sense of believing that a thing is true. He tells us that he wrote his Gospel that the reader might believe that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God. In the first epistle, where he is refuting the errors of Gnosticism which denied the true incarnation of Christ, he represents faith as the opposite of this denial. In this sense faith is an affirmation. Reference to these passages, however, will show that the object of this faith is ultimately a person, "God" or "Christ," so that, after all, these passages connote trustful reliance upon the personal object mentioned. But this is only the fringe of John's teaching on faith. He evidently understood faith to be connected with sonship, and that the one involved the other (John iii. 16). Believing on Christ and coming to Christ are one and the same thing (John xxxiii. 50-51). In John's view faith is certainly used in a sense sufficiently comprehensive to include all that men think or feel or do in appropriating the salvation which is offered in Christ. John's conception of faith is something

more than the persuasion that Jesus is the Son of God accompanied with the confession that He is the Christ. It is something more than a stage of knowledge. To believe is to have the Son (1 John v. 12); it is to receive Jesus Christ (John i. 12-13); it is to come to the Son (John vi. 35); it is to enter into the possession of eternal life (John vi. 47).

By comparison we find that John and Paul agree in their understanding of faith. For both it is more than belief; it involves personal relation and fellowship. Paul expresses it by such phrases as "in Christ," "dying with Christ," and "newness of life." John expresses it by such phrases as "abiding in Christ," "living through Christ," and "eating the flesh of Christ." In both there is a mystical element. Faith is life-fellowship with Christ. It is no mere possession of truths which lie dead and cold in the mind; it is a vital alliance with Christ, the hiding of the life with Him in God. They both looked upon faith as the very opposite of meritorious works. It had power, but that power was the vital life with which it connected the believer. The saving power of faith lies in the fact that it joins the life of the individual to the life of Christ. It furnishes, as a function of the soul, the medium of intercommunication between the old life and the world of spiritual realities.

Faith is, then, an act of the whole man.

The whole personality, viewed as focussed in the heart, believes intellectually, feels trustingly, and yields willingly to God in Christ. The man himself is the believer; there is no act in which the ego or self more absolutely gathers up the whole being than in believing. As a function of the soul, faith, in the act of believing, is the whole soul going out towards God in Christ, looking up to the Cross for salvation from sin, and bowing to the will of the Lord for service.

IV

It remains now to point out the relation between faith and a few of the most intimately related phenomena of the spiritual life.

As a state of consciousness faith is a complex experience springing from the depths of the personality when influenced by the Holy Spirit. God enters the life, as we have seen, through the Holy Spirit. In a way surpassing human comprehension He fructifies the soul by the implantation of the Christ-life. The coming of this life into the soul constitutes the "quicken-ing" spoken of in the Scriptures. It is the "new birth" produced through the Spirit (John iii. 3-8). This "new birth" affects the soul and the result is an immediate response which we call conversion. We have all along been told that regeneration and conversion are the two sides of the same act, regeneration

being God's side and conversion being man's side. This is true and yet there is a biological distinction which it does not comprehend. The divine side of this transaction is the implantation of a new and higher life, the Christ-life; the human side of this transaction is the response of the soul to the awakening produced by the incoming of this new life. Faith is related both to the incoming Christ-life and to the old personality. It is the first act of the Christ-life; it is the last act of the old personality. As such it unites the two into one conscious experience. "There must be a unifying principle," says Dr. Inge, "in which different activities of our nature are harmonized as activities of one person, directed towards one satisfying end. It is in this unifying experience that faith for the first time comes fully into its own."¹

The result of faith's operations, as a unifying principle in the soul, is the new creature. In the New Testament the new life into which human personality passes is viewed from many standpoints. In terms of life it is called the new birth. Mysticism sees in it union with Christ and fellowship with Him. Religious devotion views it as consecration and sanctification. But behind the diversity of description and the complexity of incipient doctrine resulting therefrom there lies a unity of thought

¹ "Faith and Its Psychology," p. 231.

which finds expression in the term "new creature." This new creature is a new personality. The change wrought in the soul, looked at from the human side, is produced by faith. Faith as a function of the soul admits the facts stated in the Gospel as knowledge, and these facts being inwrought upon the soul become matters of consciousness. The quickened soul perceiving the subsistent relation between itself and the Christ thus presented appropriates the new life offered and the result is a new experience. "The supernatural scheme of the Bible," says Dr. Laidlaw, "emerges in human experience. The religion of revelation—a system of supernatural facts—touches at this point the natural scheme of man and his being; for the supernatural, in this form of a personal spiritual change, becomes a fact of consciousness."¹

Here is the basis of Christianity. It is a matter of life and therefore of consciousness. The active state, the state of consciousness that is fundamental to all outward manifestations of the Christian life, is faith. It is also fundamental to all the inward experiences. A convert may have a very imperfect doctrinal system of belief, his view about the nature of the Trinity or the Atonement or the character of the relation subsisting between the divine and the human natures in Christ may be very

¹ "The Bible Doctrine of Man," p. 249.

hazy, but if through the Spirit he is led to trust himself to the divine good-will he may have the experience of deliverance before he understands the rationale of it. The teaching of Christianity in this respect is profoundly in accord with the processes of life on other levels. A child trusts its parent's love and acts upon that feeling long before it understands. Subsequent understanding may deepen the trust, but the instinctive feeling of the child precedes the reasoned reflection of later years. So with the Christian, faith goes before in the development of the life of conscious repose.

V

SPIRITUAL GROWTH

THE origin, growth, and energies of living things are the subjects which have always engaged the attention of thinking men. These are the subjects with which we are most constantly confronted in nature. The world is full of life, and life is an active principle, the chief characteristics of which are growth and reproduction. In our observation in nature we see the mysterious vital principle, called life, seizing upon the matter with which it is environed and building that matter into organic structures. This process, which we call growth, is the fundamental distinction between the living and the not living. The crystal increases and the stone enlarges, but this is by accretion and not growth. The living organism grows. In the former instance enlargement is the result of adding new particles externally ; the other, growth, is the unfolding of an internal life. The two processes belong to different worlds. The last belongs to the living world, the first to the dead.

I

In nature, as we have seen, all life comes

from antecedent life and follows in its unfolding the law of conformity to type. This law is defined by Darwin as "That fundamental agreement in structure which we see in organic beings of the same class, and which is quite independent of their habits." According to this law every living thing that comes into the world is compelled to stamp upon its offspring the image of itself. If we are to follow out the analogy of nature this process maintains in the spiritual world. We have seen that the spiritual life is an endowment from the spiritual world, and that the living Spirit of Christ dwells in the Christian. Regeneration may be defined as "God's self-communication of Himself to man." It is the implantation of a new life in the soul of man, a life different in quality to anything else in nature. This constitutes the separate kingdom of Christ and gives to Christianity alone of all the religions of mankind the strange mark of divinity.

After the implantation of the new life we should expect, from the analogies of biology, two things: First, that this new life would unfold and grow gradually into maturity ; and second, that it would follow the law of conformity to type and reproduce the Christ type in the character of the individual into whose life it comes. On the first of these there can be little controversy. The thing that strikes even the most casual observer is the gradual-

ness of growth. Development into maturity is a process. When the dead atoms of carbon, hydrogen, oxygen, and nitrogen, are seized upon by life, the organism is at first very simple. It possesses few functions. Christ recognized this fundamental process—"First the blade," says He, "then the ear, then the full corn in the ear." The second, that the life implanted in regeneration should produce the Christ type in the character of the individual, is recognized throughout the teaching of the New Testament. The apostle reiterates that the Christian in the beginning of his career is "a babe," and that he is to grow to the "full stature of manhood." We are again and again admonished to "put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him." And we are expressly told that the end and goal of Christianity is to reproduce in the Christian the Christ type: "Whom He did foreknow He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son." This conformation is the result of a process. It is accomplished by the unfolding of the Christ-life implanted in regeneration. In the process of spiritual growth the new life appropriates the life elements of the soul and builds these elements into a spiritual organism, a new personality, fashioned after the image of Christ. Thus there is a gradual unfolding of the Christ-life until the perfect counterpart

of the type is reached. This is the law of spiritual growth.

II

In the phenomena of growth we are confronted primarily with three things. In every organism there is formative matter, formed matter and the forming principle of life. Following this analogy we have in spiritual growth the old nature, the new creature, and the implanted Christ-life. There is a definite distinction, on the one hand, between the old nature and the implanted Christ-life, and, on the other hand, between the old nature and the new creature which is the product of spiritual growth. The old man is the basis or, as we have seen, the material with which the new life operates; the new creature is the product of this operation.

It would be contrary to imagine that the new creature could be formed out of nothing. An organic being is one that derives its existence from a previously existing organic being and which grows to maturity by appropriating from its environment the material out of which the organism is built up. Life merely enters into already existing matter, assimilates more of the same sort and rebuilds it. In the process of spiritual growth this same law maintains. The soul of man is the already existing protoplasm out of which the spiritual organism is

to be built. The Christ-life when it is clothed upon and becomes a living personality is the old man made new. The powers of the soul are not changed in their function when they are built into the new creature, but only in the end towards which their operations tend. There is not a function with which man is endowed that is not within itself good, and when properly and legitimately exercised produces conduct that is righteous and brings happiness and pleasure. The trouble with the natural man is not that his functions are corrupt, but that the life using these functions and operating through them is the wrong type and cannot, therefore, produce the right kind of character. The Christ-life, the heavenly and eternal type, comes into the life of man, invests itself, through a process of spiritual assimilation, with the functions and powers of the soul and builds them into the new creature.

If the soul is to furnish the material out of which the new creature is to be formed then it must possess two things: the capacity for life, and plasticity. Capacity for life is evidenced by the spiritual nature of man. He is not conceived of in the Scriptures as simply a self-centred being, living a life on earth with other animals, or, at best, sharing a self-conscious life with his fellows. He is represented as a spiritual personality, made in the image of

God, and in the very constitution of his being somewhat akin to God. Hence we find man possessed of a spirit that renders him peculiarly open to the influence of the divine Spirit. The soul has a capacity for God. Through all the ages humanity has longed for God. This longing has voiced itself in the religious proclivities of the race. In every land and in every age man has not been without a religion. The soul is a chamber not only ready to receive the new life, but the new life seems to be expected, and, till it comes, is missed. In man God has left Himself a way of approach and a ground for moral renovation.

If we would know whether the soul is capable of being appropriated by the Christ-life and builded into the new creature we will have to turn to psychology. It is in the analysis of the various phases of consciousness that we are furnished with the evidence of the plasticity of the soul. Modern psychology does not now classify mental phenomena according to the different "faculties" from which they were supposed to spring; it arranges them in groups according to the element which is most prominent in each conscious state. The three ultimate modes of consciousness are now named (according to the mental element which predominates in each) thinking, feeling, and willing. And these are the very elements with which the Christ-life seeks to clothe itself. The think-

ing element of consciousness includes all perception and memory, all forms of reasoning and imagination. It is the power by which men believe, or have intuition of truth. The feeling element of consciousness includes all emotions, such as joy, and sorrow, hope and fear, love and hate. The willing element of consciousness includes all impulses, desires, and volitions. It is the purposeful quality in human action which lies at the basis of moral character.

It must be kept in mind, however, that behind this threefold activity of thinking, feeling and willing lies the unity of the ego or self, the subject of these states of consciousness. This self, to whom belong all thoughts, feelings, and volitions, we call the soul. The soul is the subject of life. It is the bearer of the individual life and as such is capacitated for appropriation by a higher type of life. Appealing to the Christian consciousness, which should be made a separate branch of psychology, we find that the Christ-life does appropriate the elements of the soul and does build them into a new creature, the Christian. As the Spirit of God went forth in creation, as the principle of order and life in the new world, so the Holy Spirit operates directly upon the soul of man implanting within him a vital entity which is capable of picking up the life elements of the soul out of the chaos of sin and building them into a new creature, a new type of manhood that is

Christlike and spiritual. The only thing we insist upon is that in the natural man these mental and moral elements which form the basis for the new creature are spiritually lifeless. However active the intellectual, emotional, and volitional elements may be, from the point of view of the Christ-life, they are dead. That which is born of the flesh is flesh.

III

The old life furnishes the material out of which the new creature is to be constructed. The vital agent is the Christ-life implanted in regeneration. The type to be attained is the Christly character as that character is revealed in the life of Jesus. The process by which this result is accomplished with reference to the Christ-life is a growth, but with reference to the old life it is a transformation. It is evident that the Christ-life was made to grow, not stop. Or in the words of Paul, "whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son." No one for a moment doubts that this conformation is a process and that the "image of His Son" is the moral beauty which the Son displayed as the antitypical Christian character while here among men. "Predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son" implies that somewhere in the revealed will of the Father is the method by which this purpose is to be realized. It is

the decree of God that the Christ-life shall clothe itself in beauty. If there is not some law for accomplishing this result, then one of the chief gifts to the world has been forgotten. Paul has approached the nearest to the statement of the law. He says: "We all with unveiled face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord are transformed into the same image from glory to glory."

The first step in this process is the attitude of the Christ-life towards the spiritual environment. "We all with unveiled face beholding," says the apostle. Here is indicated a definite posture of soul towards the Lord and spiritual things. In the physical world the supply of nutriment for the functions of life are kept up by the environment. And so long as the organism continues to grow, think, and act, there is a constant, simultaneous, and proportionate drain upon the surroundings. And if there be nothing within reach of the organism to supply this wasted energy, life and activity must cease. What is true of the physical organism is also true of the spiritual organism. The Christ-life must be in direct contact and touch with the source of all life. Hence the uninterrupted vision. While the Christ-life appropriates the life elements of the soul and builds them into the spiritual organism, yet this is its field of operation and not its source of life and strength. The spiritual life does not get its strength

from the old nature, but from the spiritual environment.

When Paul speaks of the "unveiled face" he is referring to the attitude of the spiritual ego. For, mysterious as it may seem, and all life processes are mysterious, the transformation spoken of takes place in the individual life which is at all times a unit. Paul is, therefore, speaking of the soul as dominated by the Christ-life. The difference between the "veiled" and the "unveiled" soul is the difference between the natural man into whose life the Christ-life has not come and the man into whose soul this new life has been planted. There was never a ray of starlight in the Mammoth Cave of Kentucky; only the red glare of torches ever light its walls. So with the unregenerated soul. It is a mammoth cave, all underground, all unlighted save by the torches of selfishness and passion. Such a soul finds nothing in the Bible but mystery, nothing in the Sabbath but drudgery. The whole scheme of religion is but a chain of meaningless forms and the Gospel foolishness. Such a soul receives none of the spiritual things brought to the world through these forms, and receiving them not, cannot be transformed by them into the character of the Christ. On the other hand the man into whose soul the Christ-life has come is clear-seeing and keen-hearing; a soul of quick perceptions and prompt emotions; a soul to which the Saviour

stands out a living person, and for which heaven is waiting an expected home; a soul so sensitive, that sin makes it writhe with agony, whilst it finds holiness a true delight, and God's conscious favour an elevating joy. Such a regnant power in the soul, a new life whose aspirations are heavenward, is bound to work a transformation. Heart longings will be created. These are not vapourings of the imagination, they are prophecies, they are couriers, forerunners of things which will become realities.

The second step in this process is that the regenerated soul should have the divine type constantly in its vision. It is here that a new element enters. This element is the conscious power of choice with which man is endowed. In all animal organisms we find that growth blindly obeys the law of conformity to type. In physical development we not only follow the type involuntarily, but we are unconscious of such conformity. In the higher realms of spiritual growth the soul might have been made to conform to the divine type with no more knowledge or power of choice than the physical organism has, but then we should not have been men. Owing, therefore, to the peculiar characteristics of the living elements which are to be incorporated into the spiritual organism an additional and exceptional provision is essential. The first demand is that being conscious and having this power of choice, the

soul should have an adequate knowledge of what it is to choose. Some revelation of the type is therefore necessary. And as that revelation can only come through the type itself we must look for it there. And following this, the other demand is that the type revealed for man's conscious consideration should be the highest conceivable type.

This twofold condition is set forth in the language of the formula which outlines the law of growth: "Beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord we are changed into the same image from glory to glory, as from the Lord the Spirit." The soul enlightened by the incoming Christ-life implanted in regeneration looks upon, contemplates, beholds the "glory of the Lord." Here is set forth the divine type which is to be the model of the spiritual life. It is also indicated that in the process of "beholding" the soul comes to have an adequate knowledge of this type and becomes conscious of the fact that this type which it beholds is the supreme ideal of manhood after which the life is to be modelled. This is not a radiance to be reflected; but a person to be contemplated. That person is Christ. Not simply Jesus, the Carpenter's Son, but the crucified and risen Saviour. It is this life that constitutes the uplifting power of the Gospel. The transforming force in the kingdom of heaven is the crucified and risen Saviour.

There is summed up in Him all the powers of divine grace, all the forces of redemption, all the energies working for world uplift and soul transformation. This divine Christ is the type which the regenerated soul is destined to realize.

IV

This transformation does not take place in the soul without struggle. It would be strange indeed if it did. That one life should overcome another life, absorb and appropriate its essential elements and build them into its own being, and do this without meeting with resistance, would be different from anything we are acquainted with in the world of life around us. Struggle for existence is one of the laws of life. Not only so, but there are resisting forces confronting every species of life in nature, and these have to be overcome before there can be growth; yea, and the very existence of the species is maintained by a continuous struggle and warfare. In the spiritual world we find this struggle going on. "I find then a law," says Paul, "that to me who would do good evil is present. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man; but I see a different law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity under the law of sin which is in my members" (Rom. vii. 21-31).

In regeneration a new life is implanted, but

the old life is not purified. The carnal nature remains. This nature is not subject of the law of God, neither indeed can be, hence it is opposed to the Christ-life. In fact the two lives belong to different kingdoms. Paul uses two words to designate them. The flesh-life he designates by the Greek word "Sarx," which can only signify an earthly organism consisting of body and soul, and cannot denote either an earthly existence that is not living or a living organism that is not earthly. The Christ-life implanted in regeneration, the life that forms the new creature, he calls "Pneuma," which signifies the divine life belonging to God and communicated in Christ to man, by virtue of which communication man is regenerated. These two living entities are antagonistic forces. This is evident from the language of Paul: "For the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh; for these are contrary the one to the other" (Gal. v. 17).

The difference between these two antagonistic forces is as follows: the carnal life is received from Adam; the spiritual life from Christ. The one we get in natural birth; the other in spiritual birth. The carnal nature is the vehicle of sin; the spiritual nature is the vehicle of righteousness. The world is the environment of the carnal; the kingdom of God and spiritual things the environment of the spiritual. Satan reigns through the carnal; Christ reigns through

the spiritual. The problem of Christianity—the supreme struggle of the soul—is between these two natures: the Christ-life struggling to overcome the Adamic-life and to subject it to the divine will. Through the process of spiritual growth the carnal life is assimilated by the new life and builded into the Christian personality. By this wonderful change wrought in the soul the regenerated man becomes like Christ and subject to the will of God.

This conflict, while it is one of the concomitants of spiritual growth, is not an essential element in the process of growth. There are two fundamental characteristics of all growth: one is spontaneousness and the other is mysteriousness. No one can tell just how the flower grows. It is from the tiny bulb pushing up its stem and leaf, all the time at war with the opposing forces of gravity, until at last the flower is shaped by invisible fingers. The growing process was all the time a separate thing from the warring process. Turn to the soul and follow out the analogy. In regeneration the Christ-life is implanted in the soul. It is at first a tiny thing, "a babe in Christ." But it begins slowly to rise, pushing up its delicate virtues in the teeth of sin, shaping itself mysteriously into the image of Christ, and all the time doing this in the face of the opposition of the world, the flesh and the devil. Remember, too, that this process is taking place in the conscious

life of an individual whose nature is not subject to the law of God neither indeed can be. It will then be apparent that as this new spiritual personality is formed the old nature, which is out of harmony with it, will be arrayed in opposition to it. A conflict is bound to follow. But this conflict is one thing, and the growth of the new life is another thing. Spiritual growth is spontaneous, mysterious, beautiful, and there would be no conflict in the soul if it were not for the fact that the Adamic-life is at war with the Christ-life.

V

This growth is not augmented either by taking thought. Spiritual character is not the product of anxious work, self-denial, and conscious struggle. It is not denied that by hard work and self-restraint a man may attain to a very high character. But what is denied is that this is growth, and that this process is Christianity. The conscious struggle may give strength to the will, but every strong will is not a Christian will. Conscious efforts after goodness are generally formed for the purpose of securing what is conceived of as being the best for the self, and in the last analysis are resolvable into simply a regulative programme for the old life. But regulation is not growth. Regulation is an external process which forces the will to observe certain standards without

any thought of changing the nature of the life ; growth, on the other hand, is the unfolding of a specific type of life which brings with it a changed nature, a changed personality. All one can do is to put himself in the right relation with the spiritual environment and leave the matter of growth to the mysterious inward principle.

It is to be kept in mind, however, that while the processes of growth are beyond the reach of the individual effort, yet the vital powers which make growth possible are inherent in the regenerated soul. It is the same law governing the phenomena of growth in nature. There the branch ascends, and the bud bursts, and the fruit reddens under the coöperation of influences from without, but the inherent life within the plant appropriates these external elements and through this process of appropriation unfolds and comes to maturity. If it were not for this power of appropriation, by which the plant takes up the carbon and nitrogen which it finds within its reach, there would be no growth, whatever the external conditions might be. So with soul development. The elements which enter into and make up the body of character are external, but these elements must be appropriated by the individual soul. No one by taking thought can add to his stature, but the growing youth, by obeying the laws of nature, by taking the proper exercise and eating

the right kind of food, can give the inherent powers of his being a chance and they will add to his stature and to his strength and to his health—he will come to the full stature of splendid manhood. So let us not get the impression that by some mystic, mysterious process of the Spirit we are changed into the character and likeness of Christ, and that apart from anything that we can do. Such is not the method of this change as Paul understood it. It is a process that obeys a general and fundamental law. As the body has within it the powers that appropriate the elements of growth, so has the regenerated soul within it the powers that appropriate the elements of character. As the body obeying the law of its being eats and grows, so the soul obeying the laws of its being assimilates and grows. The food for the soul is the Gospel. It is here that we find the eternal verities which furnish the elements necessary to character. So it is a simple process of giving the soul that which will produce character.

VI

In this transformation we are changed into the image of Christ. It could not be otherwise. The regenerated soul is created anew in His image. It is made to partake of His nature. It has within it the germ of the Christ-life, and when it comes to maturity of character it can

be nothing else except like Him. It is true that we do not realize the full glory in this life, but that is no reason why we should not through faith claim the full consummation. Christ is on His throne and His people are exalted and victorious in Him. Their oneness with Him is the pledge of their glorification. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be," says John, "but we know we shall be like Him when He shall appear, for we shall see Him as He is."

Such is the method and such is the issue in spiritual growth. All is divine in its origin and secret in its processes. In eternal compassion the sovereign and renewing Spirit goes forth in redemption, as He went forth in creation, to call chaos into cosmos. Under His divine supervision the work of life-building goes on. All in it may not be understood, but the soul which has joyfully surrendered to the all-trusted Master only desires to know what is essential to its progress. Fuller understanding comes with the unfolding life. Trust is always first. Thus the Christian moves along the path of an ever brightening transformation; at once open-eyed, and in the dark; seeing the Lord, and so with a pure instinct gravitating to His will, yet content to let the mists of the unknown hang always over the next step but one.

VI

THE CROSS OF CHRIST THE MISSION
IMPERATIVE

PRESIDENT A. H. STRONG in a masterly address on "The Cross of Christ," delivered before the General Baptist Convention of North America in 1911, after he had declared that "the Cross has meant an eternally judging, suffering and saving Christ; and a continually judging, suffering and saving Church," adds that "the recognition of this supreme sacrificial event is essential to the existence of a truly missionary church. The greatest need of the hour," continues this master in his exposition of the meaning of the Cross, "is a fresh and forcible expression of the sacrificial spirit of Christ by the Church, His spiritual body on earth. As Christ's sacrificial offering for man's redemption was the crowning characteristic of His earthly ministry, in like manner must the Church, by its sacrificial service for the world's salvation, justify its claim to be the true Church of Christ. Its best talent should be put at the disposal of Him who emptied Himself of honour and became obedient to the death of the Cross. This sacrificial spirit among business men should express itself in large offerings to Him who, for our sakes,

became poor that we through His poverty might become rich. Let this central truth of the Gospel get firm hold upon the men to whom God has given worldly treasure, and then, under the constraining love of Christ, millions will be forthcoming for all our great missionary enterprises, and the Church herself will attain to a position of moral dignity and power unparalleled in her history."

This profound burst of eloquence Dr. Strong calls his confession of faith. And well may he so call it. It should be the confession of faith of every Christian and of every Church. The heart of the Gospel is the Cross. From the Cross is sobbed out heaven's message of life and heaven's imperative to service.

The divine imperative which is to hurl the forces of Jesus across mountains and plains and stormy seas until the "every creature" in the Great Commission has been reached with the message of love is centred in the Cross of Christ. Did you ever stand with Him in your imagination on that mountain top appointed in Galilee and hear Him as He delivered to His apostles the marching orders for His people for all the years? Listen as He speaks. "Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you all the

days even unto the consummation of the age." Behind that triumphant and imperial command is Calvary. If there had been no Cross of suffering there could have been no command of triumph. The "all power" given is on the other side of the all surrender made. Jesus here asserts that He as "Son of Man" has received from the Father supreme authority in heaven and in earth, over the whole kingdom of God in its fullest extent. This is not given to Him as Son of God; for, as God, naught can be added to Him or taken from Him; it is a power which He has merited by His incarnation, death and passion. As the purchase of His sacrifice all authority in heaven as priest with God is His—all authority on earth as King of men is His.

I

Did you ever stop to ask yourself this question: What is it that Jesus demands of His followers? Have you ever thought seriously, thought until you have arrived at a definite conclusion concerning the superlative duty? Such a consideration might give you a new vision. The Christian religion takes higher ground in respect to human duty than any pretended message from heaven ever dared to assume; and it makes claims, which, for boldness and authority, stand entirely without parallel. The imperial demand is that all who come into the experience of the heavenly life shall give

themselves to Christ in the work of establishing the kingdom of heaven throughout all the world.

Christ never thought of His kingdom as being anything less than universal and world-wide. His final command to His disciples was: "Go ye into all the world and disciple the nations." His parting instruction was: "Not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father. But ye shall receive power, the Holy Spirit coming upon you: then shall ye be My witnesses both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth." The ultimate end of the saving powers of the Gospel is the "every creature" of the Great Commission. The final consummation of the redemptive forces in the kingdom of grace is the "all creation" in the command of the heavenly King. You cannot divorce the kingdom of heaven from the geography of the world. It was so in the beginning, it is so now. The map of America was in the divine conception concerning the kingdom, so also was the map of China and India. The Son of God could think only in terms that were world-wide. To Him the earth was a unit. There were no seas, no mountain ranges, no desert plains. He saw no national boundary lines, and knew no distinctions of race or conditions among the sons of men. Finite creatures think in terms of continents, sections, division of the earth; they reach the

limit of their comprehension when they have included in their thought a few of the races of men, but with the Son of God nothing short of a world including all the races of the family of man could satisfy His conception of a mission worthy of His love.

The kingdom of Christ must include therefore Tartar and Tagal as well as Caucasian. It can be nothing less than the reign of Christ in the collective body of men in the material, intellectual and spiritual features of the civilization and social life of the whole world. This includes the environments of men, for the social well being of men must always include the increased capacity and restfulness occasioned by the ministry of their surroundings to their mutual uplift and progress. So long as conditions in Russia exist which make persecution possible; so long as the people in China are bound down by the traditions of the past; so long as political corruption maintains in Europe and America; just so long will the world be retarded in its social progress and the kingdom of Christ delayed. To these as to all retarding influences there is but one cure. That cure is found in the Cross of Christ. The world's social hurt will be healed only by the coming of the universal kingdom of peace; only by the enthronement of Christ as King; and this can never take place until the world has bowed at the foot of His Cross.

II

The time has come and now is when every citizen of the kingdom of Christ must feel that this kingdom—its enlargement and glory—is the grandest interest in the universe. The movement for the social betterment of the world, for the moral and spiritual uplift of humanity is not simply a desirable thing for Christians to carry forward ; but it is the chief and most important undertaking under heaven. An active interest in the promotion of Christ's kingdom is a mark of true discipleship. A man's Christian life is not what it ought to be if the outreach of his sympathies is limited to anything less than all mankind.

Behind this the largest movement ever known in the history of humanity there is a supreme reason. Behind this superlative call to duty there is a triumphant, a regnant, and an eternal argument. Christ never makes a demand upon the soul that He hasn't a reason for, a reason sufficiently divine and exalted to inspire the heart of His love. That reason is set forth by the great apostle to the Gentiles : "Know ye not the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich yet for our sakes He became poor that ye through His poverty might become rich." Here the humiliation of Jesus Christ which culminated on the Cross is set forth under the figure of poverty and on this supreme stoop of His humiliation there is based

an argument and an appeal. In Romans Paul begins the practical part of the epistle with an appeal based upon the sacrificial work of Jesus. "I beseech you therefore brethren by the mercies of God that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God which is your reasonable service." The sacrifice of the Cross for us stands behind the appeal of God to us. Because Christ came and died for the world we are to go to the world with the message of life.

Then let us in our efforts to get hold of the supreme imperative go back to the source of authority and power. We go to-day into all the world armed with an argument which justifies the supreme sacrifice, an argument that justifies the proclamation which we make to the world, which proclamation is that "there is life for a look at the crucified one." Wherever a preacher or a missionary goes—he may be a weak man or an unlearned man—but he goes armed with the argument of the Cross and by this sign he shall conquer. Christ "lifted up" will be an argument to do what no reasoning, no philosophy can do—an argument high as heaven, and deep as hell, and against which no sophistry of earth, no subtlety of the devil can avail.

III

But Christianity is more than an argument; it is a vital power. It is of little avail to

preach Christ crucified if the Cross were only an argument. It is to show utter ignorance of human nature to suppose that any external demonstration will disenchant men of the world. The argument may be overwhelming, but what is this to one who will not weigh the evidence? I speak now of professed Christians as well as unbelievers. How are we going to stir these out of their apathy? What can we bring to bear on the host of indifferent ones in order to enlist them in this great work? How are we going to breed a passion for souls? The instrumentality to accomplish this work is the Cross; the power that alone can awaken and arouse men from this fatal unconcern and callousness is the Christ lifted up.

Christianity should be colour, Christianity should be romance, Christianity should be strife, Christianity should be glory, Christianity should be sacrifice. Where shall we get these things? What is there in a bloodless and cross-less religion to evoke in man that higher passion which alone reveals him to himself, tragic and momentous and austere? Up in heaven there is a throne set. Below it, here on earth, amid the toil and moil, divine energies pass hither and thither; but in the deepest heart of it all there is the spirit of the Lamb as it has been slain working to transform and to conquer. This is the vision by the light of which we are flung out of the drab mon-

ony into the arena of that age-long struggle for the establishment of the kingdom of God.

This is the Christian's life romance. How can we believe it, you and I? How can we come to see it? How can we come to feel it? How can these kingdom forces that are throbbing in the world and working to the world's redemption throb in our own souls? How can we come into a mission experience that will forever change the religious horizon for us, that will make us over again? There is but one way. It is a vision of the Cross and its meaning. You and I must have the Cross erected in our souls; then and not till then can we do as Jesus did, take the facts as they are, the actual facts of the world as it is to-day and bring God into them. We can then identify ourselves, heart and soul, with the sorrows and labours of men, with the weeping of women, with the pain of little children. Inside all the famines and plagues, the wrongs and the curses of earth we can then creep, and, having come, make them all our own. This is the method of the Cross. This is what Jesus did in coming to the Cross. The bitterness of the world passed over Him, its agony shook His soul; and therefore in Him God's royal purpose was declared and revealed; and that bitterness and that agony are about us still. Look at the world to-day, look at its sufferings, its sorrows, its poverty, its nakedness, its pain. We must

go closer down to it. We must fling into it our reason, our imagination, our conscience, so that we can actually see what the unhappy see, and feel what the wronged feel. This is the method of the Cross. This can happen in our lives only when the Cross is erected in our souls. And this is the dynamic of missions. We claim to be one with the Christ of God, but that Lamb only lives and reigns and opens the seals of the tomb of our souls because He is one with us and in us through the Cross. He lives for the world because He died on the Cross for the world; He lives in the world because He is one with the lives of those who have through the Cross died to the world in Him.

Such a death will give birth to a heart-wrenching passion for sinners. Have you ever felt the immediate tug of sinning humanity's need? As you have looked upon the broken and ruined splendour of the soul; as you have contemplated the wreck of human happiness and the perversion of human society all because of sin; as you have contemplated all this have you put the question to yourself, Do I really care? Have you ever felt the sense of brotherhood which sets you to bothering about your brother? The true Saviour-man cares; the man who has erected the Cross in his life cares; not theoretically, not distantly, not professionally, but actually, vitally, through the immedi-

ate impact of need and with an immediate outrush of love. This is the only basis for a world programme. A mission movement that is not inspired by love—love to Christ and one's fellows—will be ephemeral ; it will come and go with the changing times and tides of men, with the rise and fall of human values. But a mission interest built upon love will wane not, through bright and cloudy weather, through the stress and storm of financial flurry, through the shocks of the changing times and tides of men, it will still remain. Love is eternal. It is optimistic. It is insistent. It does not have to resort to the multiplication table to calculate its responses. The man who cares and cares because he loves, is not careful to count noses in estimating how much he cares. The heart of love does not have to be pried open with the leverage of multitudes. A soul yearning is not fed on columns of figures. Christ did not stop to figure up the number of men in the world to be saved ; He came to save men not because there were so many ; but because they were so dear. And the only inspiration to love ; the only dynamic that drives out our selfishness and causes us to bother about our brother is the Cross of Christ.

One cannot begin to open up the fullness of this subject. The Cross ! What overwhelming truths flash out from it as from a blazing focal, radiating central point ! What exhibition does

it give of the value of a soul ! What an admonition of the miseries of the damned ! Devouring flames, chains of darkness, howlings of despair—oh, how the Cross, where Jesus bleeds, gives us a most terrific idea of hell ! The Cross ! What an awful lustre does it pour upon the justice, the severity and the holiness of God ! Above all, the love of God—how dazzling, with what surpassing brightness, does not that shine here—sending a heavenly effulgence over all this world of darkness even down to the gates of hell ! Can this Cross be viewed with indifference ? Is it strange that the Cross has power to rouse and stir the heart ? Is not this the wonder, not that men are shaken, but that all are not melted and mastered by the very first proclamation of a crucified Redeemer ; and that whenever and wherever that truth is proclaimed, the scenes of Pentecost are not renewed ? When one looks at the Cross, how is it possible not to love God ? not to call with the Psalmist upon heaven and earth, upon our souls and all within us, to love and praise the Lord ? And with Andrew Fuller to find our hearts forever breaking out into unknown strains of love, and our lips—go where we will—still singing :

“Oh, for this love let rocks and hills,
Their lasting silence break,
And all harmonious human tongues
The Saviour’s praises speak.”

IV

The Cross stands as the symbol of sacrifice. On it Jesus gave Himself for the world, and His appeal to us for service comes from the mount of His own sacrifice. It can have no other meaning to us than that it had for Him. Here is symbolized the supreme gift which every Christian is called upon to make, the giving of himself for the coming of the kingdom of God in the world.

Let us not be guilty of criminal perversion of God's word by inferring that because He has promised a specific reign of Christ in all the ends of the earth, that He will certainly bring it to pass, and therefore we may repose in a state of entire inaction and unconcern. There is no piety in that confidence which neglects prayer, or which praying does not add to prayer diligent effort to attain that for which it prays. God's kingdom is a kingdom of means. He never did, and probably never will, convey the light of the Gospel to any people by direct miracle. "Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God," says the apostle; and as if to stir his hearers with a holy zeal in the work of preaching the Gospel, he continues, "but how can they hear without a preacher, and how can they preach except they be sent?" The world-wide work of kingdom building has been commissioned to men.

The work which we are called upon to ac-

complish is the moral renovation of this entire world. Not a corner of it is to be left unreclaimed. Over all of it Christ is to reign. To those who would go to foreign fields I would say go; go as fast as winged ships can carry you, but do not go because American sin is not picturesque enough. Do not go because you think it is only by going that you can work for the bringing in of the kingdom. Go only because the leader has commanded you to take your position at the post of duty in the foreign field. The army of King Jesus is world-wide, the campaign of conquest is universal, and every point of contact with the forces of evil is the front of battle whether the lines be drawn in the home field or on the foreign land.

To you who are commissioned to stay and fight in the ranks at home let me give you this word of encouragement. The battle cannot be waged successfully abroad unless the enemy be kept in check at home. The greatest problem of foreign missions to-day is a home problem. Treasuries of benevolence are being lavished in vain, and the lives of men spent for naught, because, as soon as the faithful missionary begins to succeed in turning the miserable heathen from his idols and saving him from his pollution, modern commerce, with its heart lusting for gold, and fearful of losing its prey, rushes in, and beats to the earth the work of heavenly benevolence, and knocks in the head

the new-born hopes of regenerated tribes. With every vessel bearing a missionary there goes a cargo of rum, and a troop of moral perverts to debauch the heathen. Can we extend over all the earth the victories of the Prince of Peace while we are bearing in one hand the emblems of salvation, and in the other hand the price of blood ? Can we break the chains of spiritual thraldom abroad while we rivet the fetters of moral bondage at home ? Can we teach the races of the earth the law of universal love, while we are trampling on human rights, treading out the life from the immortal mind and crushing, with iron heel, the image of God in man in our home land ? So long as the so-called Christian nations are filled with graft and greed ; so long as the most dreadful corruptions of morals and the most dismal defiance of every sound principle come from Europe and America ; just so long will the far-flung battle lines of King Jesus move forward uncertainly and the kingdom of peace be retarded in its coming.

V

And how shall this be changed ? How shall our home land as well as the lands across the seas be lifted up and redeemed ? There is but one way, it is the Cross of Christ. The Cross of Christ is the only remedy for a lost world. We know that where Christ crucified is not

preached, nothing is done for eternity. Much there may be of sublimity and beauty in the orations of the pulpit ; but if Christ crucified be not there—while the imagination may be entertained—all will be to the soul only the beauty of frost, and the sublimity of the desert. Do you want this earth to be born anew ? Then bring it to the Cross. Do you wish it to make Jesus King ? Then erect the Cross in the heart of its commercial, its civic and its social life. Do you wish it to drop all its heart burdens of slavishness and come into the life wherein there is liberty ? Then plant the Cross in the midst of its sorrow and sin as the sacrificial oblation for all its wickedness. The Cross is the gateway of glory for all the race. It is more than deliverance from sin, it is entrance into the life of God. It is not disaster, it is design. All nations, kindreds, tribes and tongues are included within the ample fold of its all-comprehending sufficiency. The ages to come and the ages past are to rejoice in the blessings which it confers.

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